GOULD - THE BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA - SUPPL. P. III

6
B
A
11
1a

Biblioteca nazionale centrale di Firenze

This page was intentionally left blank

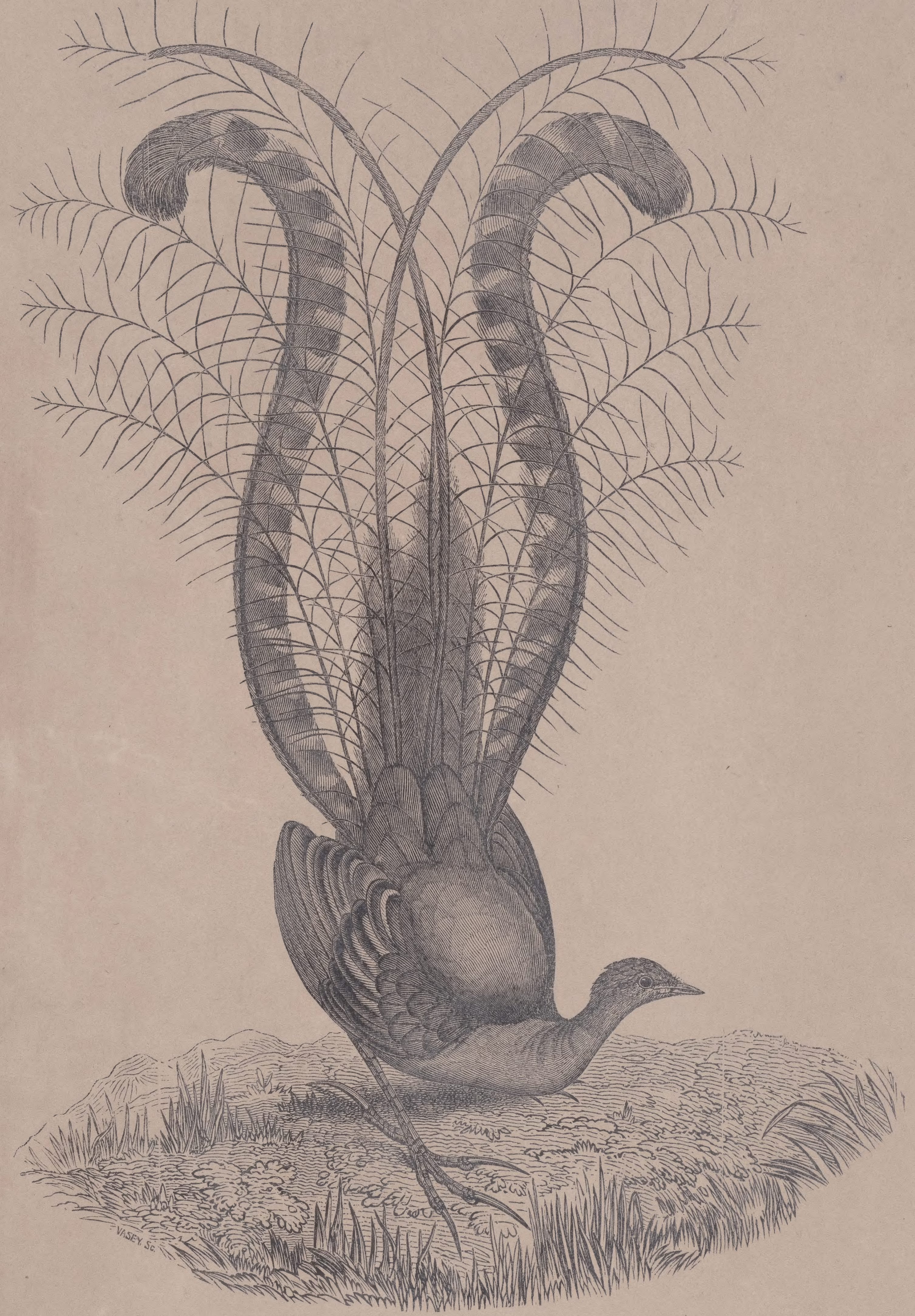
*

Pagina lasciata intenzionalmente vuota

[Price Th

AI-1

THE
BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA.



BY J. GOULD, F.R.S. &c.

SUPPLEMENT.—PART III.

CONTENTS.

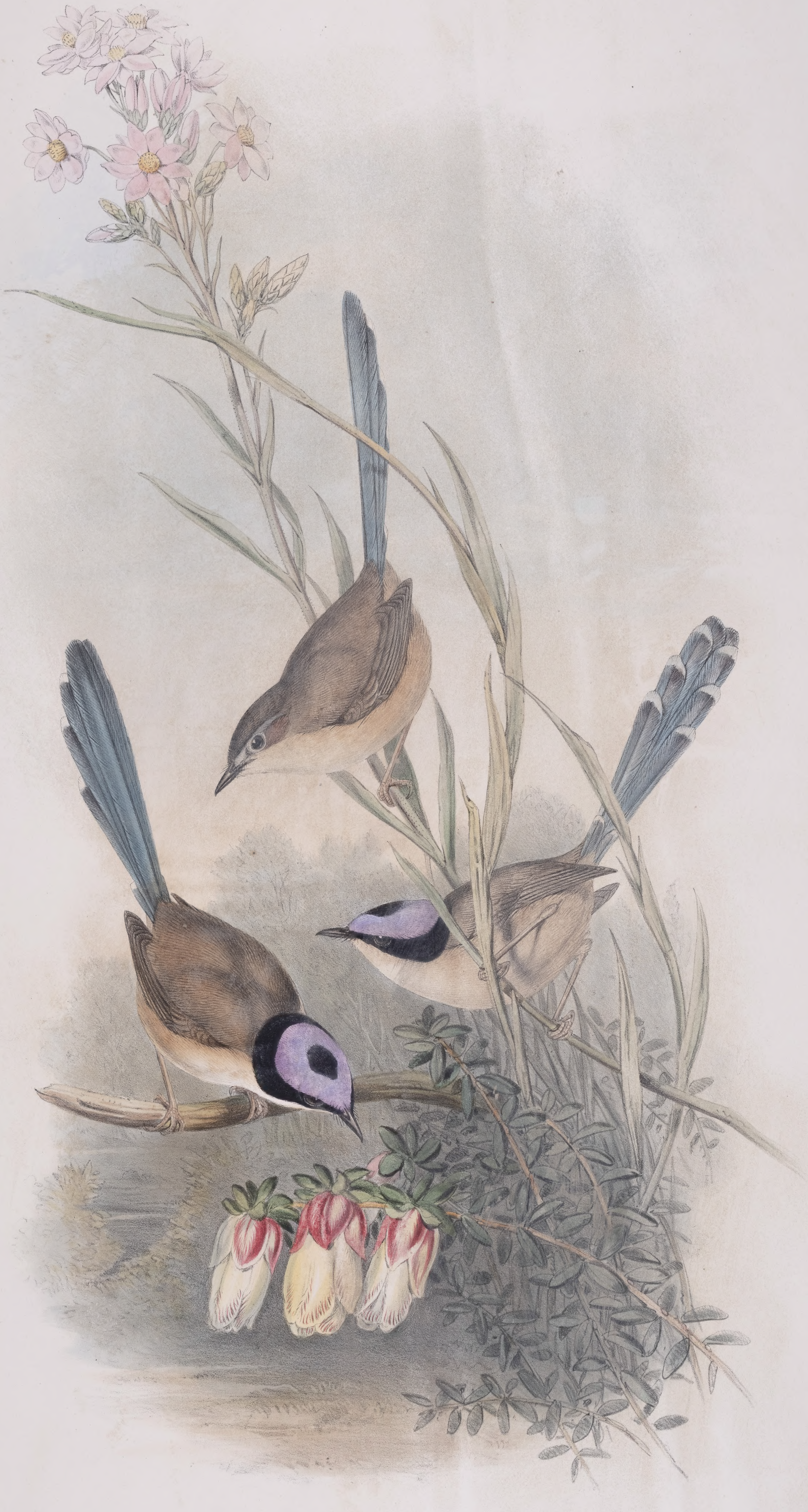
Malurus coronatus.
Semioptera Wallacei.
Psephotus chrysopterygius.
Nestor notabilis.
—— Esslingii.
—— hypopolius.
Casuarius Bennetti, head of the natural size.
———— ————, whole figure reduced.
Petroica? cerviniventris.
Chrysococcyx minutillus.
Zosterops albogularis.
Zosterops tenuirostris.
Spatula variegata.
Chlamydera cerviniventris.
Merula poliocephala.
Gelochelidon macrotarsa.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR, 20, BROAD STREET, GOLDEN SQUARE,
SEPTEMBER 1st, 1859.

[*Price Three Guineas.*]

6 B. A. 11. 1

BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE CENTRALE
FIRENZE



MALURUS CORONATUS, *Gould.*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

MALURUS CORONATUS, *Gould.*

Crowned Wren.

Malurus coronatus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxv. p. 221.

Charming as are many of the smaller Australian birds, I think the present species is entitled to the palm for elegance and beauty, not only among the members of its own genus, numerous and beautiful as they really are, but among any other groups of birds yet discovered; the charm, too, is considerably enhanced by the great novelty in the style of its colouring; for in how few birds do we find the lovely lilac tint which encircles and adorns the head of this bird: a similar tint, it is true, pervades the nape of the *Chlamyderæ* (Bower birds); but I scarcely know of any third instance.

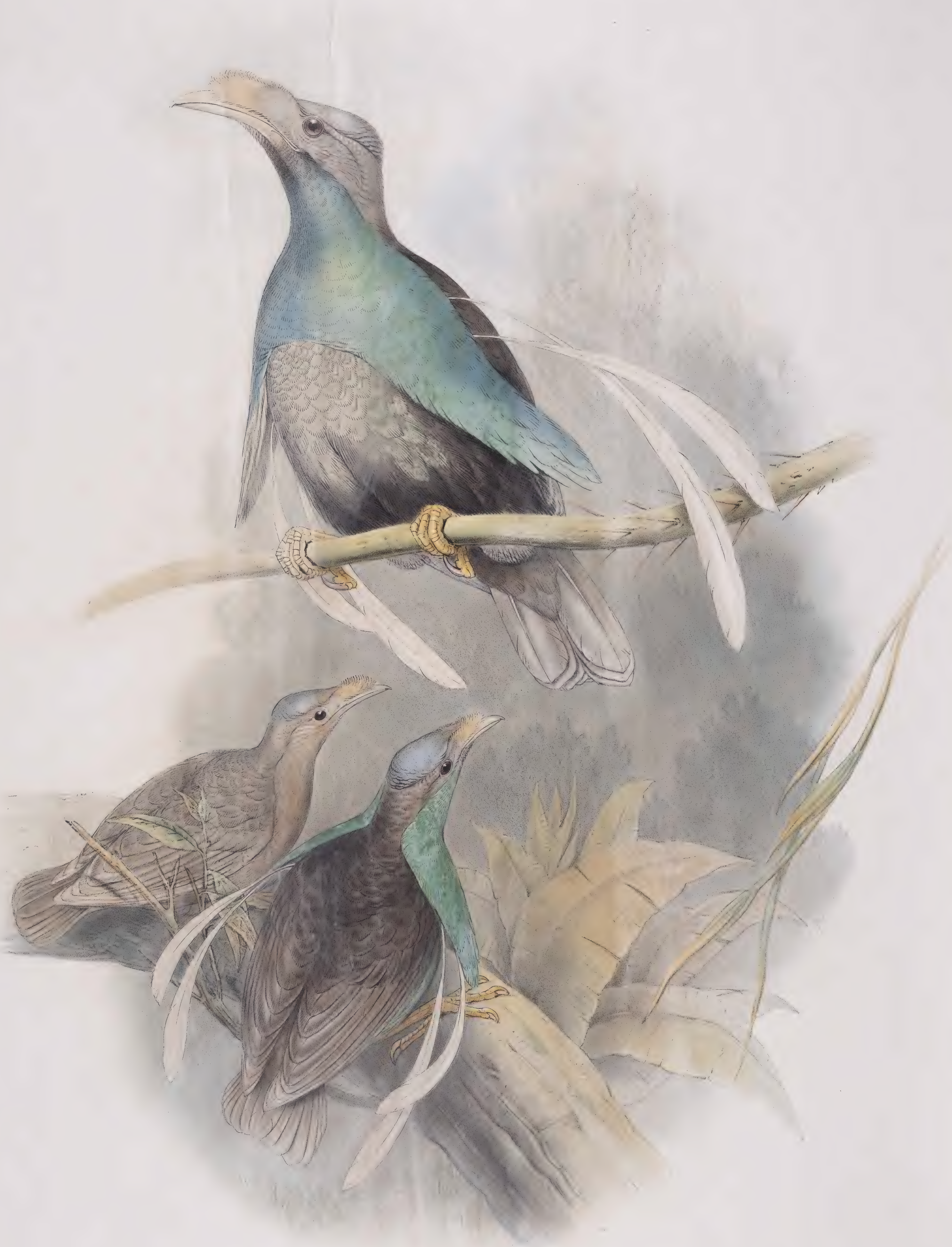
Having premised thus much respecting this new *Malurus,* I now come to the painful task of naming its collector; I say painful because the gentleman who shot and brought it to this country has fallen, like many other Australian explorers, a victim to the climate of that country, good and congenial to Europeans as it generally is. It will be recollected by all those who take an interest in scientific explorations, that Mr. Elsey accompanied A. C. Gregory, Esq., as surgeon and naturalist on his great journey from the Victoria River, on the north-west coast of Australia, to Moreton Bay, where the entire party safely arrived, and Mr. Elsey returned to England; it soon, however, became evident that he had contracted the disease called *hæmoptysis,* and he was speedily obliged to remove to a warmer climate: he selected one of the West India Islands, and, on arriving, commenced his investigations with his usual spirit; but he rapidly became worse, and science shortly had to deplore the loss of one of her most enthusiastic votaries. The little I saw of this gentleman impressed me with the belief that he had a lively taste for nature; and had he been spared, I feel assured he would have distinguished himself greatly in one or other branch of the natural sciences.

All that is known of the *Malurus coronatus* is that it is an inhabitant of the countries bordering the Victoria River. Both sexes were procured, and they now form part of our collection at the British Museum.

The male has the crown of the head rich lilac-purple, with a triangular spot of black in the centre, and bounded below by a band of velvety black, which, commencing at the nostrils, passes backwards through the eye, dilates upon the ear-coverts, and meets at the back of the neck; back and wings light brown; tail bluish green, becoming of a deeper hue towards the extremity; lateral feathers margined externally and tipped with white; under surface buffy white, becoming gradually deeper on the flanks and vent; irides brown; bill black; feet fleshy brown.

The female has all the upper surface light brown; lores and space behind the eye white; ear-coverts chestnut; in other respects she is similar to the male.

The figures are of the natural size. The plant represented in the upper part of the Plate is the *Schœnia oppositifolia*; that below is the *Genetyllis tulipifera*.



SEMIOPTERA WALLACEII, *Gray*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

SEMIOPTERA WALLACEI, *G. R. Gray.*

Standard-Wing.

Paradisea wallacei, G. R. Gray in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxvii. p. 130.
Semioptera, G. R. Gray, *Ib.*

One of the most remarkable Insessorial birds that has been discovered for many years is the one just sent to London by A. R. Wallace, Esq., from the island of Batchian, and to which Mr. G. R. Gray has given the generic appellation of *Semioptera*. How much gratified Mr. Wallace must have been when this remarkable form first met his gaze! and how enthusiastically does he write on this and the other objects with which he is surrounded!—determining to keep his discovery secret, yet not resisting the temptation to make it known when next he writes home. As many of my readers may not be acquainted with the position of the island of Batchian, I may state that it is one of the Moluccas, and, according to Guthrie's 'Geography,' "produces cloves, is very fruitful, and belongs to the Dutch; long. 125° 5′ E." Now, if there be one nation which has paid more attention to the natural productions of their foreign possessions than any other, it is the Dutch: how, then, is it that so conspicuous a bird as the *Semioptera* should not have been sent to Holland, and made known by Temminck or Schlegel? With what pleasure and enthusiasm would its arrival have been hailed at their great Leyden Museum! Thus much by way of prelude: I shall now proceed to give a copy of Mr. Wallace's letter to Mr. S. Stevens, in which he announces his interesting discovery:—

"Batchian, Moluccas, Oct. 29, 1858.

"Here I have been as yet only five days; but from the nature of the country, and what I have already done, I am inclined to think it may prove one of the best localities I have yet visited. Birds are as yet very scarce; but I still hope to get a fine collection, though I believe I have already the *finest and most wonderful* bird in the island. I had a good mind to keep it a secret, but I cannot resist telling you. I have a new *Bird of Paradise*! of a new genus!! quite unlike anything yet known, very curious and very handsome!!! When I can get a couple of pairs, I will send them overland, to see what a new Bird of Paradise will really fetch. Had I seen the bird in Ternate, I should never have believed it came from *here*, so far out of the hitherto supposed region of the *Paradiseidæ*. I consider it the *greatest* discovery I have yet made; and it gives me hopes of getting other species in Gilolo and Ceram. There is also here a species of Monkey—much further eastwards than in any other island; so you see this is a most curious locality, combining forms of the East and West of the Archipelago, yet with species peculiar to itself. It also differs from all the other Moluccas in its geological formation, containing iron, coal, copper, and gold, with a glorious forest vegetation, and fine large mountain streams: it is a continent in miniature. The Dutch are working the coals; and there is a good road to the mines, which gives one easy access to the interior forests.

"I can do nothing at drawing birds, but send you a horrible sketch of my discovery, that you may not die of curiosity. I am told the wet season here is terrible, and that it begins in December; so I shall probably have to leave then."

The sketch alluded to in the above extract having been placed in Mr. G. R. Gray's hands for examination and comparison with other known species, the following notes of that gentleman relative to it were read to the meeting (of the Zoological Society, March 22nd, 1859):—

"This bird proves, as Mr. Wallace remarks in his letter, to be a new form: it has, springing from the lesser coverts of each wing, two long shafts, both of which are webbed on each side at the apex. It is the possession of these peculiar winged standards that induces me to propose for it the subgeneric appellation of *Semioptera*; and I further add the provisional specific name of *wallacii*, which appellation I think is justly due to Mr. Wallace for the indefatigable energy he has hitherto shown in the advancement of ornithological and entomological knowledge, by visiting localities rarely if ever travelled by naturalists."

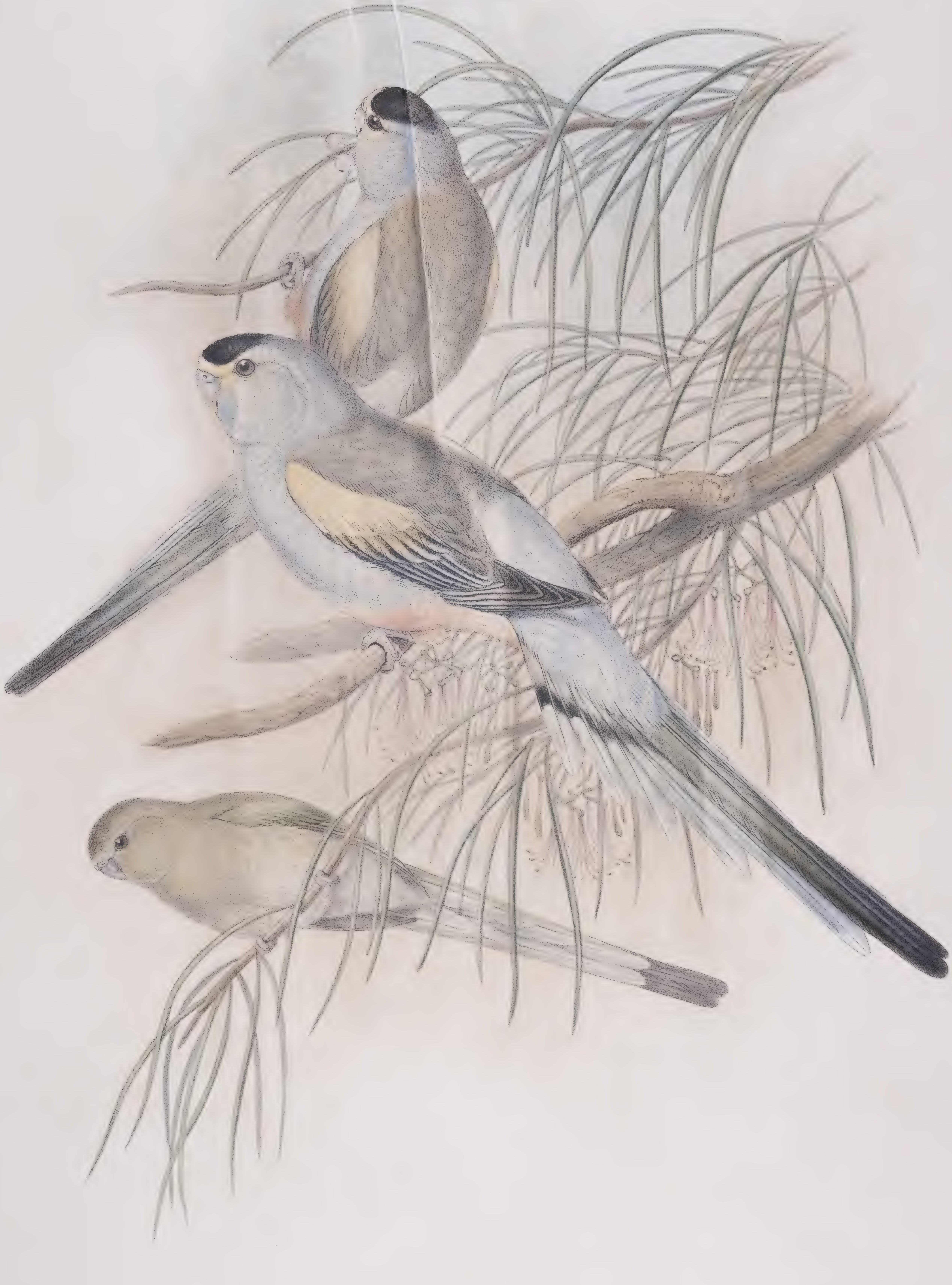
On the 28th of June 1859, in the absence of Mr. G. R. Gray from London, I exhibited to the meeting of the Zoological Society, held in the evening of that day, some specimens of both sexes of this singular bird which had just arrived, and took the opportunity of remarking that, while I considered Mr. Gray right in giving it a new generic appellation, the family to which Mr. Wallace had assigned it was not, in my opinion, the right one. This beautiful bird is not indeed a Bird of Paradise if we regard the *Paradisea apoda* and *P. Papuana* as typical examples of that group; it is in fact very closely allied to *Ptiloris*, so nearly so, indeed, as scarcely to be separable from that form; for on comparing it with the well-known Rifle-bird of Australia, *Ptiloris paradisea*, it will be seen that they are very similar both in their structure and in the disposition of their markings: the same great difference in the outward appearance of the sexes also occurs in both. Second only in interest to the discovery of this bird, would be an account of its habits and manners; and I trust Mr. Wallace will ere long enlighten us on these points. In the absence of this information, I would venture an opinion that it is partially a creeper in its habits; but whether it frequents the boles of the larger trees or the faces of rocky precipices is uncertain; neither do we know in what way the males display the plumes which spring out at right angles from the outer part of the shoulder: that the bird has the power of erecting and depressing them at will is without doubt. In the female they are entirely absent.

The male may be thus described:—

"On the basal half of the upper mandible a series of erected tuft-like feathers of a pale sandy buff, blending on the forehead into the delicate velvety dove-coloured feathers of the crown and occiput; sides of the head, back of the neck, and upper surface light brown, becoming darker and having a velvety appearance on the back and scapularies; each of these feathers has also a very narrow edging of a lighter hue; wings light brown, fading into buffy white, with a silvery gloss at the tips of the primaries and secondaries; shafts of the primaries white; the two lengthened plumes springing from each shoulder snowy white; tail brown with white shafts, and becoming of a silvery light brown at the tip; throat, neck, chest, and projecting side-plumes fine emerald-green, becoming very brilliant on the tips of the plumes; under surface brown, the feathers of the breast bordered with brilliant green, giving it a scaled appearance; flanks washed with the same colour, but less brilliant; thighs light brown; bill brownish horn-colour; feet yellow.

The female has the tuft on the upper mandible and the crown of the head the same as in the male, and is entirely devoid of the green colouring and lengthened plumes both of the breast and wings, her entire plumage being brown, without ornamentation of any kind.

The Plate represents one male of the natural size, and a second male and a female considerably reduced.



PSEPHOTUS CHRYSOPTERYGIUS, *Gould.*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter del. et lith. *Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.*

PSEPHOTUS CHRYSOPTERYGIUS, *Gould.*

Golden-backed Parrakeet.

Psephotus chrysopterygius, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxv. p. 220.

One of the greatest pleasures enjoyed by the late celebrated botanist Robert Brown, during the last thirty years of his life, was to now and then exhibit the drawing of a parrot made by one of the brothers Bauer, from a specimen procured somewhere on the north coast of Australia, but of which no specimen was preserved at the time, and none had since been brought to England. It afforded him at times much amusement to exultingly show me this drawing as a bird I could not find, and which I had not included in my great work on the birds of that country. Now the only way in which I could meet this kind of half taunt from my friend, was to remark that I should get it some day or other; and I certainly did exult when I received an example from the hands of Mr. Elsey, a year or two prior to Mr. Brown's death. On comparing the bird with the drawing made at least forty years before, they proved to be so much alike that no doubt remained on my mind as to its having been made from an example of this species. This, then, is one of the novelties for which we are indebted to the explorations of A. C. Gregory, Esq.; and I trust it may not be the last I shall have to characterize through the researches of this intrepid traveller. Mr. Elsey, who, as is well known, accompanied the expedition, obtained three examples—a male, a female, and a young bird—all of which are now in our national collection. The bird is in every way a true *Psephotus*, and moreover is a very lovely species. It is allied both to the *P. pulcherrimus* and *P. multicolor*, but differs from them, among other characters, in the rich-yellow mark on the shoulder.

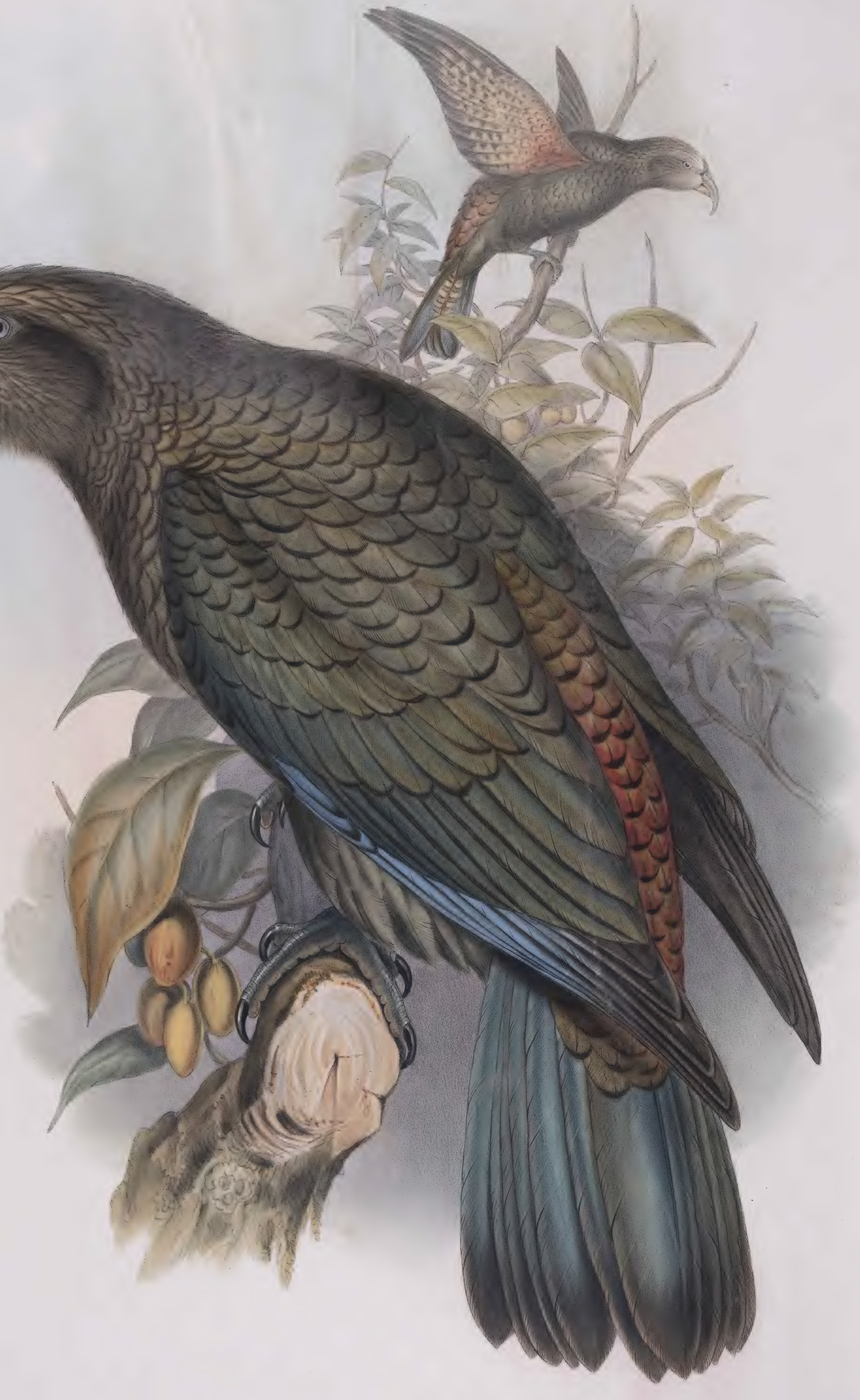
In the notes accompanying the specimens, Mr. Elsey states that they were procured on the 14th of September, 1856, in lat 18° S. and long. 141° 33′ E., and that their crops contained some monocotyledonous seeds.

The male has a band across the forehead, extending above the eye to its posterior angle, of very pale yellow; on the centre of the crown a patch of black; sides of the head, cheeks, neck, throat, upper portion of the abdomen, lower part of the back, rump, and upper tail-coverts verditer blue, somewhat green on the cheeks and upper-tail coverts; immediately below the eye a tinge of yellow; back of the neck, back, and scapularies light greyish brown, slightly tinged with green; shoulder and lesser wing-coverts fine yellow; primaries and secondaries black, margined externally with blue; feathers of the lower part of the abdomen, vent, and under tail-coverts light scarlet, margined with greyish green; two centre tail-feathers dark green at the base, passing into deep blue towards the extremity, and tipped with dull black; the remaining tail-feathers light green crossed by an irregular oblique band of dull bluish black, beyond which they become of a paler glaucous green, until they end in white; but each has a dark stain of bluish green on the outer margin near the tip; irides brown; bill and nostrils bluish horn-colour; feet mealy grey.

The female is similar to the male in colour, but all the hues much paler, and the markings much less strongly defined.

In the young state the whole of the head, all the upper surface, wing-coverts, throat, and breast are of a pale glaucous green; the rump and upper tail-coverts and the tail similar to the same parts in the male, but not so bright; and the lower part of the abdomen is greyish white, with faint stains of scarlet.

The figures represent the male and the female of the size of life, and a reduced figure of the young in the distance.



NESTOR NOTABILIS, *Gould.*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

NESTOR NOTABILIS, *Gould.*

Kea Parrot.

Nestor notabilis, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxiv. p. 94.—G. R. Gray, List of Spec. of Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus., pt. iii. sec. ii., *Psittacidæ*, p. 100.

It must be remembered that we are indebted to Mr. Walter Mantell for the acquisition of a recent specimen of the *Notornis*: and second only in importance to this extraordinary and almost extinct bird, is the present remarkable species of Parrot, a bird equally as rare as the *Notornis*, and apparently equally as near its extinction. When writing on any of the birds of the New Zealand and adjacent group of islands, it soon becomes evident that we are dealing with the few remaining members of an extremely ancient fauna, the remnants, in fact, of genera and species which in the lapse of a few years will be entirely effaced from the surface of our globe. The Philip Island Parrot (*Nestor productus*) is already gone; and the Kaka (*Nestor hypopolius*) must soon follow, but not so soon, probably, as the present bird. With what care, then, should such relics be preserved in our museums; to none but hermetically sealed cases should they be consigned. Let it be remembered how great are our regrets that the evidence of the former existence of the Dodo comprises only a single foot and head and a few dried bones. Imbued with the importance of recording the history, and giving a portraiture of these nearly extinct birds, I have endeavoured to be most accurate in their delineation, especially with regard to the four species of *Nestor*. I have nothing to add to the few remarks respecting the history of the present bird accompanying my original description in the "Proceedings of the Zoological Society;" and therefore I cannot do better than transcribe them here:—

"The *Nestor notabilis*, which is called "*Keá*" by the natives, is the largest of the four species of the form now known, and is certainly one of the most interesting of the ornithological novelties lately discovered. It not only differs from its near allies *N. hypopolius* and *N. productus* in its greater size, but in the greater uniformity of its colouring, in the yellow toothed markings of the inner webs of the primaries and secondaries, and in the orange toothed markings of the inner webs of the tail-feathers; the yellow colouring of the under mandible is another of the peculiarities by which it may be distinguished.

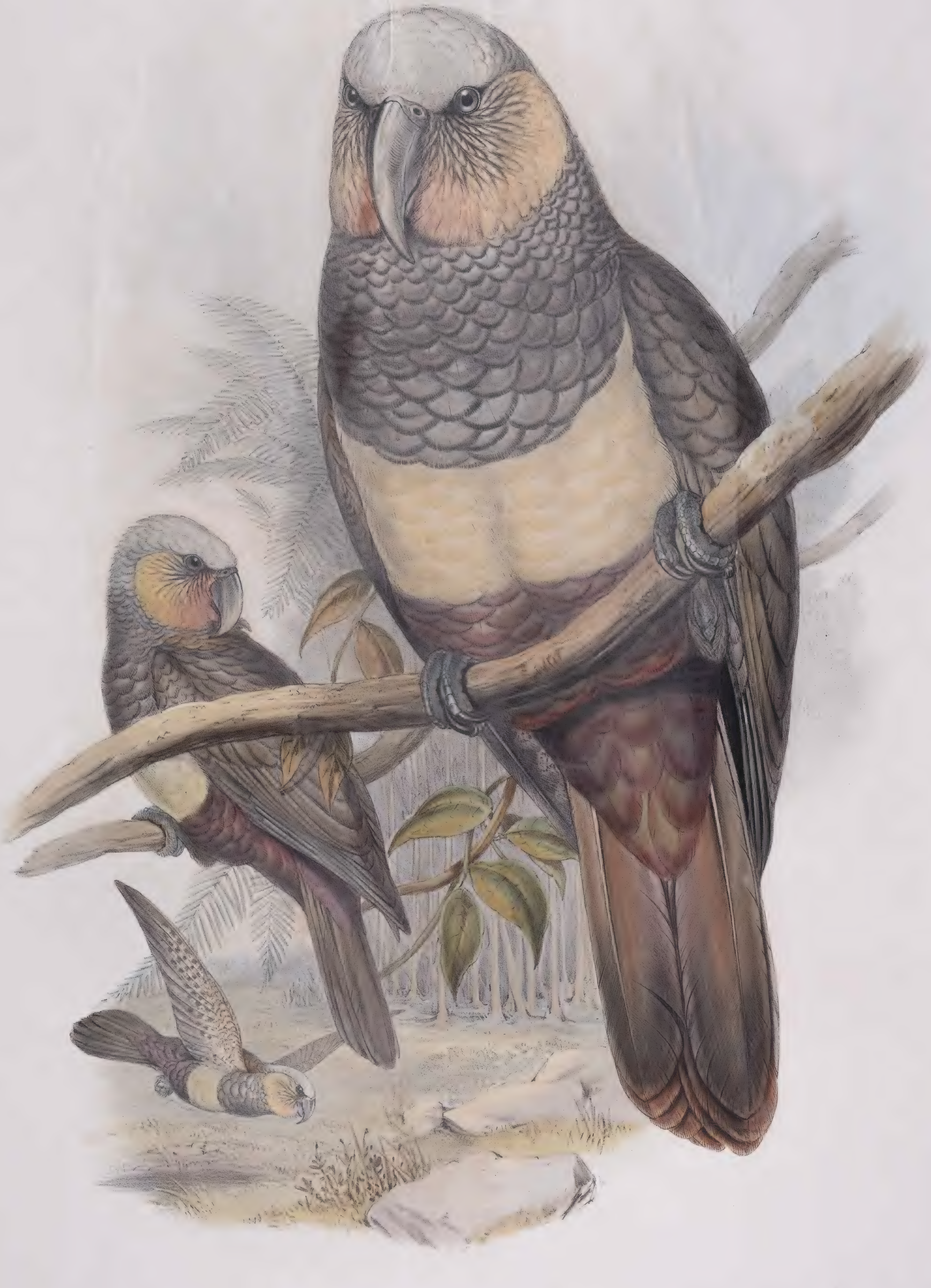
"Mr. Mantell informed me that he first heard of the existence of the *Keá* about eight years ago, from some old natives whom he was questioning as to the birds of the Middle Island. They said the *Keá* somewhat resembled the *Káka* (*Nestor hypopolius*), but that, unlike that bird, it was green; and added that it used formerly to come to the coast in severe winters, but that they had not seen it lately. Mr. Mantell has only obtained the two specimens exhibited of this fine bird: they were shot in the Murihiku country; and for one of them he was indebted to Mr. John Lemon of Murihiku.

"General hue olive-green; each feather tipped in a crescentic form with brown, and having a fine line of the same colour down the shaft; feathers of the lower part of the back and the upper tail-coverts washed near the tip with fiery orange-red; primaries brown, margined at the base with greenish blue; tail dull green; inner webs of the lateral feathers brown, toothed on their basal two-thirds with orange-yellow; all the tail-feathers crossed near the extremity with an indistinct band of brown, and tipped with olive-brown; feathers of the axillæ fine scarlet; under wing-coverts scarlet tipped with brown, the greater ones banded with brown and with yellow stained with scarlet; basal portion of the primaries and secondaries largely toothed with fine yellow, which is not perceptible on the upper surface unless the wings are very widely spread; upper mandible dark horn-colour; under mandible yellow, becoming richer towards the point; feet nearly yellowish olive.

"Total length, 18 inches; bill, 2½; wing, 12½; tail, 7½; tarsi, 1⅝.

"*Habitat.* The Middle Island, New Zealand."

The figure on the accompanying Plate is of the natural size.



NESTOR ESSLINGII, *Souancé*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith. *Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.*

NESTOR ESSLINGII, *Souancé*.

Prince of Essling's Parrot.

Nestor Esslingii, De Souancé, Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1856, p. 223.—Gray, List of Spec. of Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus., part iii. sec. 2, *Psittacidæ*, p. 100.
——— *Novæ-zelandiæ*, Bonap. Rev. et. Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 155.

A single specimen only of this magnificent Parrot has come under my notice; and this example is perhaps the only one that has yet been sent to Europe. It formerly formed part of the collection of the Prince D'Essling of Paris, but now graces the National Museum of Great Britain. It is in a most perfect state of preservation, and is without exception one of the finest species, not only of its genus, but of the great family of Parrots. The native country of this bird is supposed to be New Zealand; but I, as well as M. de Souancé, have failed to learn anything definite on this point. In size it even exceeds the great Ka-ka (*Nestor hypopolius*), which it resembles in the form of its beak, while in its general colouring it closely assimilates to the *N. productus*; in some features of its plumage, however, it differs from both. In both those species the tail-feathers are strongly toothed on the under surface with red; in the *N. Esslingii* no such marks occur, the toothing on the inner webs of the primaries is not so clear and well defined, and the light-coloured interspaces are more freckled with brown.

As I have treated the subject of the near extinction of this species and its allies rather freely in the description of *N. notabilis*, it will not be necessary to say anything on the subject here.

I need scarcely remark how interesting additional examples of any of these rare Parrots would be to our collections, especially of the present species; second only to which would be a knowledge of the country it inhabits.

I observe M. de Souancé states that he believes the Essling Collection also contained a young specimen of this bird; but having examined the individual to which he refers, and which is now in the British Museum, I am somewhat doubtful as to its belonging to this species.

The following is M. de Souancé's account of this bird, which, as he is the original describer of the species, is given in his own words:—

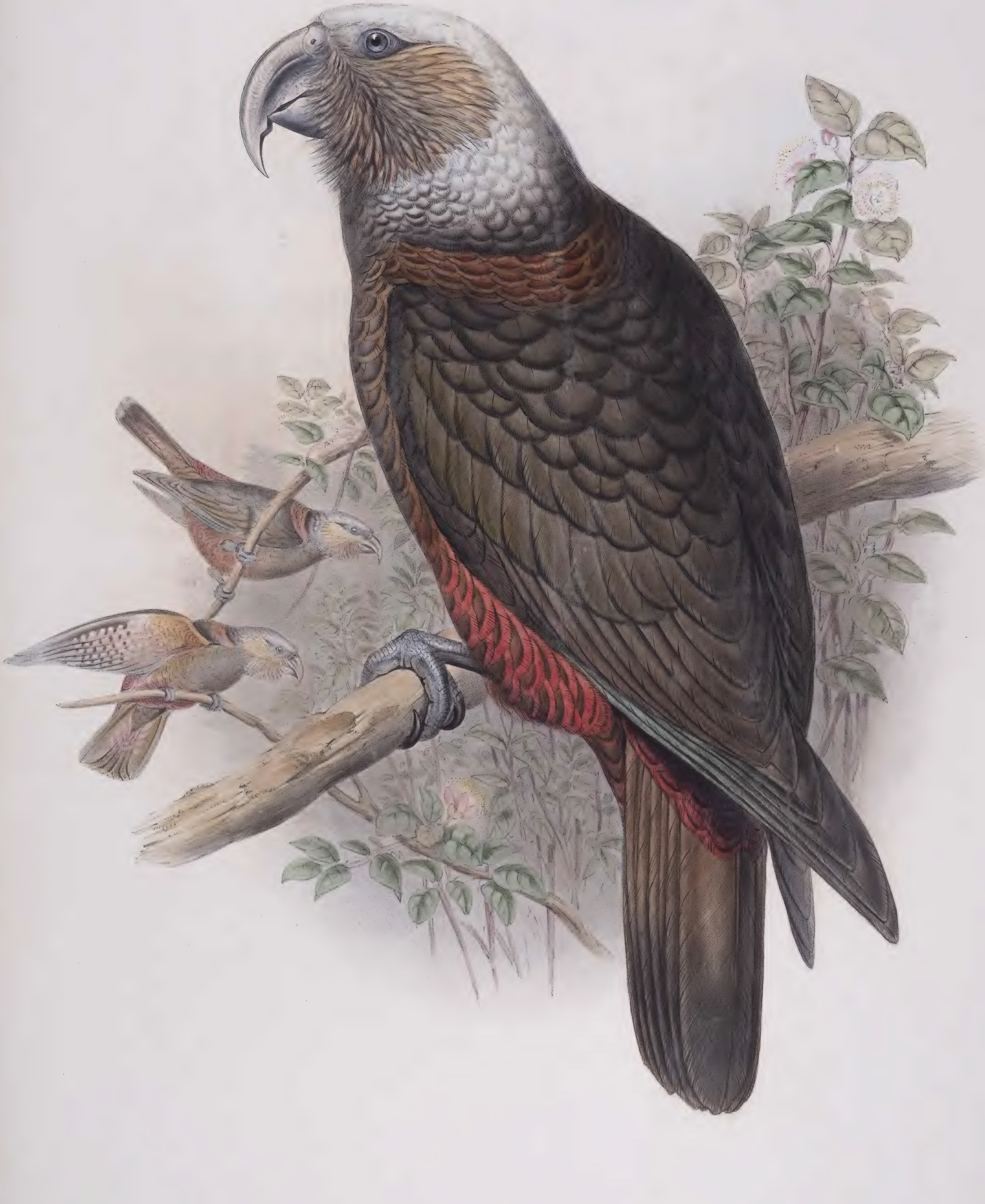
"Nestor Esslingii, nob. Le Nestor dont nous allons donner la description est, sans contredit, l'oiseau le plus remarquable de la collection Masséna. Intermédiaire entre le *N. hypopolius* et le *N. productus*, ce magnifique Perroquet réunit, dans son plumage, des détails caractéristiques de ces deux espèces.

"Coloration générale semblable à celle du *N. hypopolius*: tout le dessus de la tête gris blanchâtre, les plumes auriculaires jaune orangé très-vif, les joues rouge orangé; les plumes de la poitrine gris cendré, mais largement bordées de brun; une large ceinture d'un blanc jaunâtre règne sur le milieu du ventre; le bas-ventre, les cuisses et les couvertures de la queue rouge brun; bec et pieds de couleur sombre. L. T. 50 cent.; aile 30 cent. Nouvelle-Zélande? Un autre individu, jeune, ressemble tout-à-fait au jeune de l'espèce ordinaire, mais il offre quelques plumes blanches sur l'abdomen, ce qui indique clairement qu'il appartient à cette espèce.

"En comparant cette espèce avec ses deux congénères plus anciennement connus, nous voyons qu'il diffère du *N. hypopolius*, dont, au reste, il est fort voisin, par la coloration plus vive de ses joues et par sa ceinture blanche. Nous signalerons dans le *N. productus*, un fait analogue à celui que nous avons déjà remarqué dans les *Loriculus philippensis*, *L. Regulus*, *L. Bonapartei*; c'est-à-dire, le prolongement excessif de la mandibule supérieure, qui rappelle ce que l'on voit parmi les espèces américaines, chez l'*Enicognathus leptorhynchus*, et pour les Cacatoes, dans le genre *Licmetis*. Ici rien de pareil n'a lieu: le bec entièrement semblable à celui du *N. hypopolius*. M. Gould, dans ses 'Oiseaux de l'Australie,' figure un jeune *N. productus*, qui par sa poitrine grise semblerait avoir quelques rapports avec cette espèce et qui s'en éloigne beaucoup cependant par sa tête brune et la forme de son bec. Nous caractérisons donc les trois espèces de *Nestor* de la manière suivante:—1° *N. hypopolius*. Bec grand et fort; dessus de la tête blanc grisâtre; plumes auriculaires et joues faiblement nuancées de jaune et de rouge. 2° *N. Esslingii*. Bec grand et fort; sommet de la tête blanc grisâtre; plumes auriculaires et joues très-vivement colorées de jaune et de rouge orangé; poitrine gris brun, une large ceinture blanc jaunâtre sur l'abdomen. 3° *N. productus*. Bec très-allongé et grêle; sommet de la tête brun; les joues d'un jaune nuancé de rouge; la gorge, la poitrine et les couvertures inférieures des ailes jaune pâle. Ile Philips. Le jeune a la poitrine brune."

To this list M. Souancé would doubtless have added my *Nestor notabilis*, had he been aware of its existence.

The large figure is of the size of life; the other much reduced.



NESTOR HYPOPOLIUS.

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

NESTOR HYPOPOLIUS.

Ka-ka Parrot.

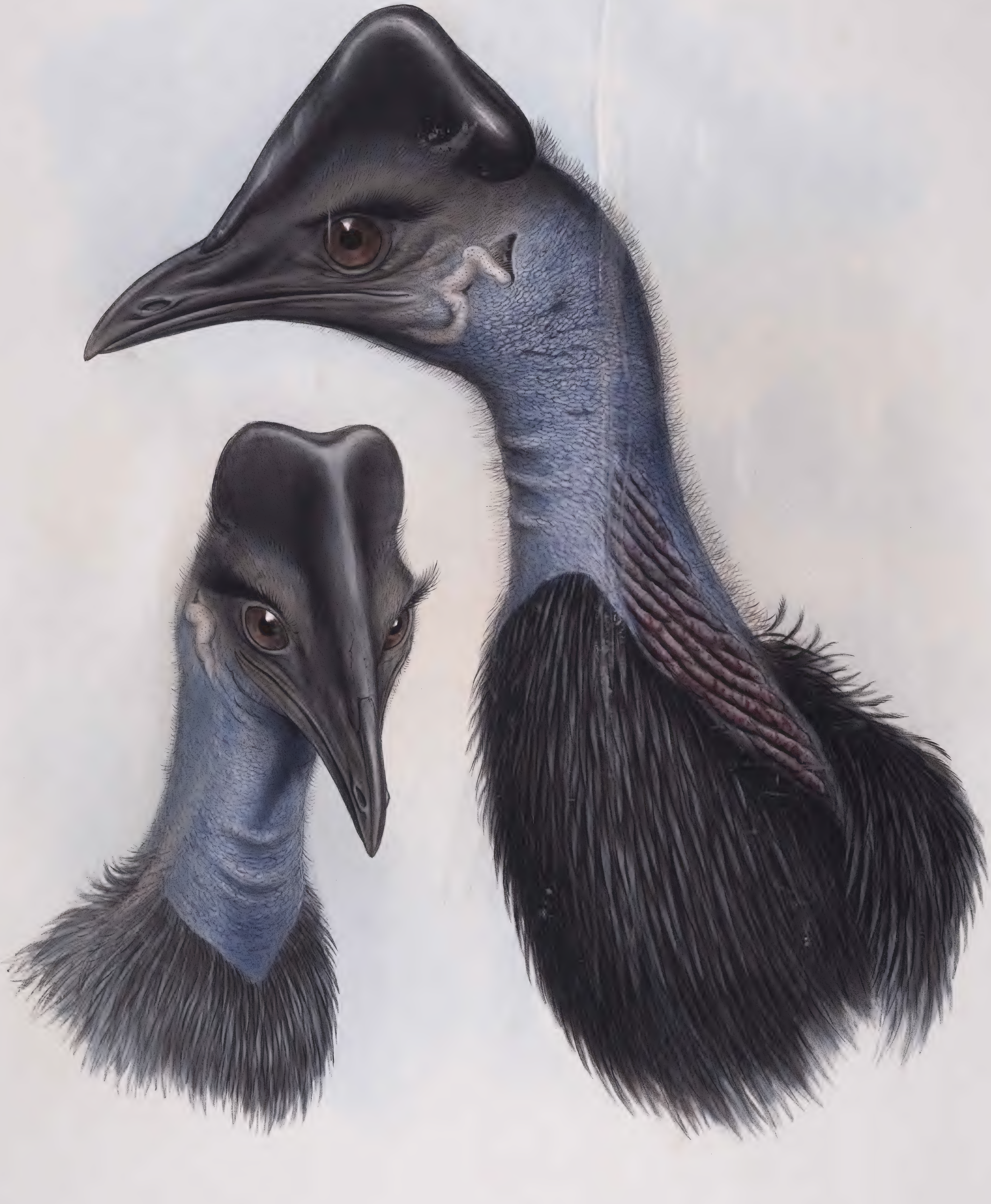
Psittacus hypopolius, Forst. Icon., 50.
———— *Meridionalis*, Gmel. Edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 333.—Dieff. Trav. in New Zeal., vol. ii. p. 193.
———— *Nestor*, Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 110.
———— *Australis*, Shaw, Mus. Lever., pl. at p. 87.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 8, *Nestor*, sp. 1.
———— (*Kakadoe*) *Nestor*, Kuhl, Consp. Psitt. in Nov. Act. &c., pp. 12, 86.
Nestor hypopolius, Wagl. Mon. Psitt. in Abhand. &c., pp. 505 and 696.—Selby in Jard. Nat. Lib. Parrots, p. 121, pl. 12.—Gould, Syn. Birds of Aust., pl. . fig. 2.—Bonap. Rev. et Mag. de Zool., 1854, p. 155.—De Souancé, Rev. et. Mag. de Zool., 1856, p. 222.—G. R. Gray, List of Spec. of Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus., part iii. sec. ii., *Psittacidæ*, p. 99.
Southern Brown Parrot, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. i. p. 264.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. viii. p. 522.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. ii. p. 211.
Nestor Novæ-Zelandiæ, Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 191.
Centrourus Australis, Swains. Class. of Birds., vol. ii. p. 303.
Ka-ka, Natives of New Zealand.

Although New Zealand has been known to us since the days of our celebrated voyager Captain Cook, and been a British possession for so many years, no one of its many intelligent settlers has written a line respecting this species of Parrot; neither has the English ornithologist Swainson, who resided there for some years, nor the German historian of its birds, Dieffenbach, nor the enlightened Governor Grey, said one word on the subject. Had an opportunity offered for my visiting New Zealand, this void in the history of one of the most interesting of the great group of Parrots should certainly have been filled up; what more, then, can I do than give an accurate figure of the bird, and call the attention of the residents of New Zealand to the subject, in the hope that one or more of them will study and record the habits and economy of the bird before it is extirpated, and its name and a few stuffed skins alone left as an evidence of its once having existed. Although urging this so strongly, I am aware that of all the members of the genus the present species is the commonest, and that at this moment numbers are yet to be found in the New Zealand group; still I feel assured that it is one of the species which before many years have elapsed will become extinct. A very great dissimilarity both in size and colouring occurs in different examples of this species, so much so as to induce a belief, both in my own mind and in that of others, that they may constitute two species, a great and a little *Ka-ka*. Some of the specimens have the whole of the crown and back of the neck and the outer portion of the wings bluish grey; others appear to be real Nestors, having very hoary heads; some have very distinct collars of beautiful-fringed feathers at the back of the neck, while in others this feature is more feebly developed. It will be a question for the colonists to determine if there be more than a single species, or if the differences seen in the skins sent to Europe are indications only of local varieties, and to what cause they may be due.

This bird is the type of Dr. Wagler's genus *Nestor*, the species of which are rendered remarkable by the depth and richness of their colouring; the only outward difference in the sexes would appear to be the somewhat smaller size and less brilliant colouring of the female. It is said to be one of the most noisy and impudent of its race, to have a voice harsh and disagreeable in the extreme, and to possess considerable powers of imitation.

Crown of the head and nape hoary, slightly tinged with green, and with a narrow edging of brown to each feather; ear-coverts striated with dull orange and brown; feathers at the cheeks and front of the throat hoary bordered with brown, and washed with red at the base of the bill; all the upper surface olive-brown, each feather margined with dark brown, and the feathers of the neck tipped with three semicircles of orange-brown and orange; wings and tail olive, becoming paler on the margins and tip; under wing-coverts scarlet, crossed by narrow bands of black; primaries and secondaries deeply toothed on their internal webs with light salmon-colour, those of the tail with deep-reddish salmon-colour; feathers of the breast olive, with a narrow crescent of brown near the tip, beyond which is a second of dark-reddish orange; lower part of the back, upper tail-coverts, abdomen, and under tail-coverts olive, largely tipped with deep rich red, within which, near the end, is a narrow crescent of brown; bill horny; feet mealy brown.

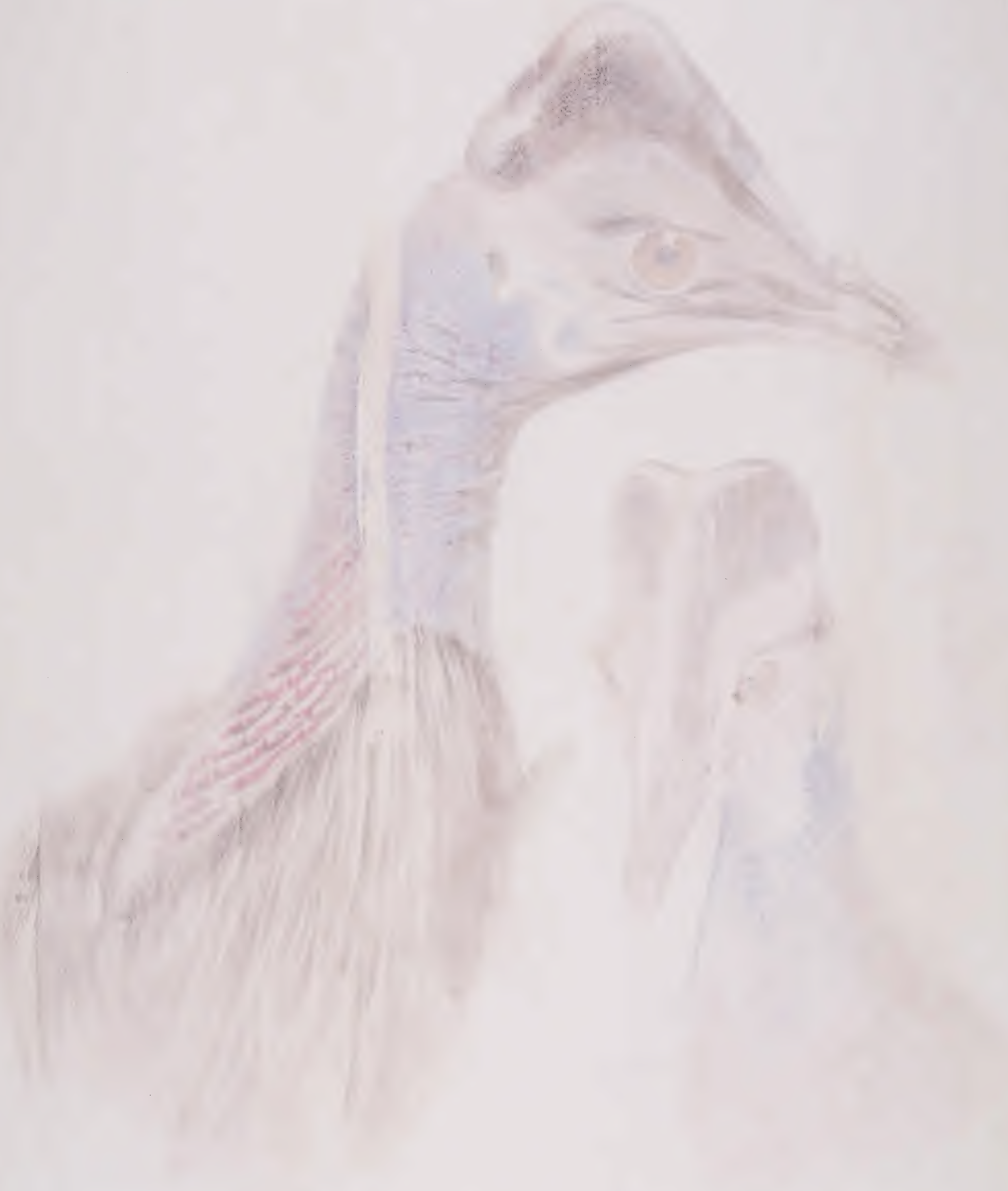
The large figure on the accompanying Plate was taken from a tolerably old bird, and is of the size of life; the reduced figure is given to show the colouring of the under surface of the wings and tail.

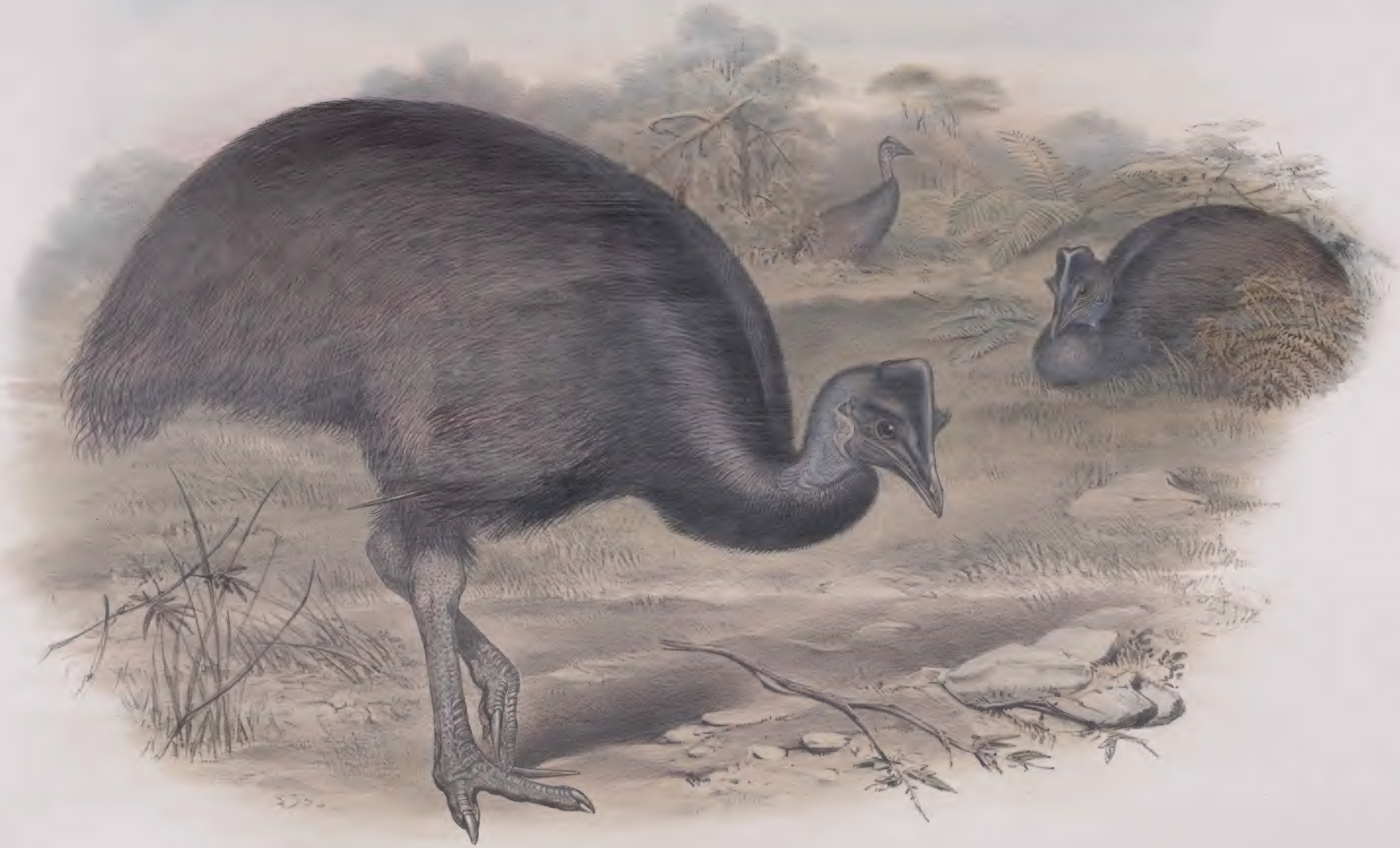


CASUARIUS BENNETTI, *Gould*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.





CASUARIUS BENNETTI, *Gould*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

CASUARIUS BENNETTI, *Gould*.

Bennett's Cassowary.

Casuarius Bennetti, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxv. p. 269, pl. 129.—Gray in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part. xxvi. p. 271, pl. 144.—Dr. Bennett in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxvii. p. 32.
Mooruk, Aborigines of New Britain.

Who would have supposed the former existence of an extensive group of Struthious birds of great magnitude and comprising many species? and what naturalist would have imagined that so much of the bony structures of these birds would have been brought to light—that not only their generic but their specific characters may be accurately described, and even their entire skeletons mounted in our museums? Yet these things have been realized within the last few years, the indefatigable zeal and careful study of an Owen having enabled him to determine and arrange the semi-fossilized remains of numerous species of a great family of birds which formerly existed on our globe, and of which some few remain to testify as to the character of their plumage and their economy of life. It is a living representative of this almost extinct group that forms the subject of the present paper, and the discovery of which must be hailed with interest, tending as it does to throw a light on the history of those huge birds of remote antiquity—the *Dinornis* and its allies. Professor Owen considers this new bird and the Cassowary (*Casuarius galeatus*) to be the most nearly allied living types of his genus *Palapteryx*; and if this opinion be correct, we may infer that the habits and economy, as well as the kind of plumage and the character of country inhabited by the extinct birds, were very similar. I have always considered the Cassowary to belong to a totally different group to the Ostriches, which are adapted for roaming over vast plains and open country during the day-time, and to feed upon berries, fruits, mollusks and small animals generally; while the Cassowary, the Mooruk, and the Apteryx are partially or wholly nocturnal, living reclusely in the gullies and humid parts of dense forests, feeding upon the roots of ferns and other plants peculiar to such situations. The hair-like character of their feathers bespeak these habits and mode of life, as much as the plumes of the Ostriches do their adaptation for open plains and savannahs. Having premised thus much, I now proceed to state that it has been a source of much gratification to myself, that I have been enabled, through the kindness of Dr. Bennett of Sydney, further to add to our knowledge of this group by making known the existence of an entirely new species of *Casuarius*; I mention my gratification, because I consider this to be one of the most important additions to ornithology I have ever had the good fortune to bring before the notice of the scientific world. It is true that the same remark might be made with regard to *Balæniceps*, the *Menura Alberti*, and many other extraordinary birds I have had the pleasure of naming; but the present species and the *Apteryx Oweni* are members of a nearly extinct family of birds, the remnants of a group which played an important part in the economy of nature in periods long gone by. How much, then, does science owe to Dr. Bennett for having secured and sent this bird to London! and how much does the Society in whose possession this valuable donation is deposited, owe to him for his liberality! Three examples of this fine bird, a splendid adult male and two younger specimens, grace the Gardens of the Zoological Society of London, where they live side by side with the Ostrich, the Rhea, the Emeu, the Apteryx, and its allied congener, the Cassowary. All are in good health; and such a display of great Struthious birds was never before seen, and probably never will be again, and ought alone to be a sufficient attraction for visitors to this justly popular establishment.

On the arrival of the first Mooruk, I was somewhat sceptical as to its being specifically distinct from the common Cassowary; but as the bird increased in size, and the helmet became more developed, this suspicion was dispelled from my mind; and now that the bird is fully adult, it is apparent that no two species can be more distinct. Compared with the Cassowary, the Mooruk is a smaller and shorter bird, and has much thicker legs; and the helmet, instead of being in the form of an elevated casque with a short rounded ridge, rises high at the base, and then branches out into two overhanging lobes, the horny part which unites them being lowest in the centre—the back part of this elevated double crest being flat and rising rather obliquely from the head near the occiput. This feature has been carefully depicted in the accompanying Plate, which represents the head of the size of life; its form will therefore be more clearly perceived by a reference to the Plate than by any description, however accurate and minute. The colouring of the Mooruk, when it first arrived in England, was rufous mixed with black on the back and under part of the body, and raven-black about the neck and breast; the loose wavy skin of the neck was beautifully coloured with iridescent tints of bluish purple, pink, and an occasional shade of green; and the feet and legs were of a pale ash-colour. The body has now become generally darker, the bare skin of the fore part of the neck of a more uniform smalt blue, and the legs of a somewhat darker tint. I am much indebted to my friend, G. F. Angas, Esq., of Sydney, for a very accurate drawing of the young state of this bird; and I cannot too strongly express my thanks to him for the great trouble he has taken in making these correct delineations, as well as for several others that have reached me: it is pleasing to find a gentleman who has the power, willing to aid science in this way.

Dr. Bennett, after whom I have named the bird as a just compliment to one who has ever manifested the greatest love for Natural History, besides presenting the living birds to the Zoological Society, has enriched the volumes of their "Proceedings" with some interesting details as to the habits of the bird while living in his possession at Sydney—some in the form of letters to myself, others as direct communications; and these I have great pleasure in reproducing here.

"I send you an account of a new species of Cassowary, recently brought to Sydney by Captain Devlin in the cutter 'Oberon.' It was procured from the natives of New Britain, an island in the South Pacific Ocean, near to New Guinea, where it is known by the name of '*Mooruk.*' The precise locality in which the bird was obtained was a native village under two hills named by navigators the Mother and Daughter, on that part of the coast of New Britain lying between Cape Palliser and Cape Stephen.

"The feet and legs, which are very large and strong, are of a pale ash-colour, and exhibit a remarkable peculiarity in the extreme length of the claw of the inner toe on each foot, it being nearly three times the length which obtains in the claws of the other toes. This bird, which is immature, also differs from the *Casuarius galeatus* in having a horny plate instead of a helmet-like protuberance on the top of the head, which callous plate has the character of, and resembles, mother-of-pearl darkened with black lead: the form of the bill differs considerably from that of the Emu (*Dromaius Novæ-Hollandiæ*), being narrower, longer, and more curved, and having a black and leathery cere at the base; behind the plate of the head is a small tuft of black hair-like feathers, which are continued in greater or lesser abundance over most parts of the neck."

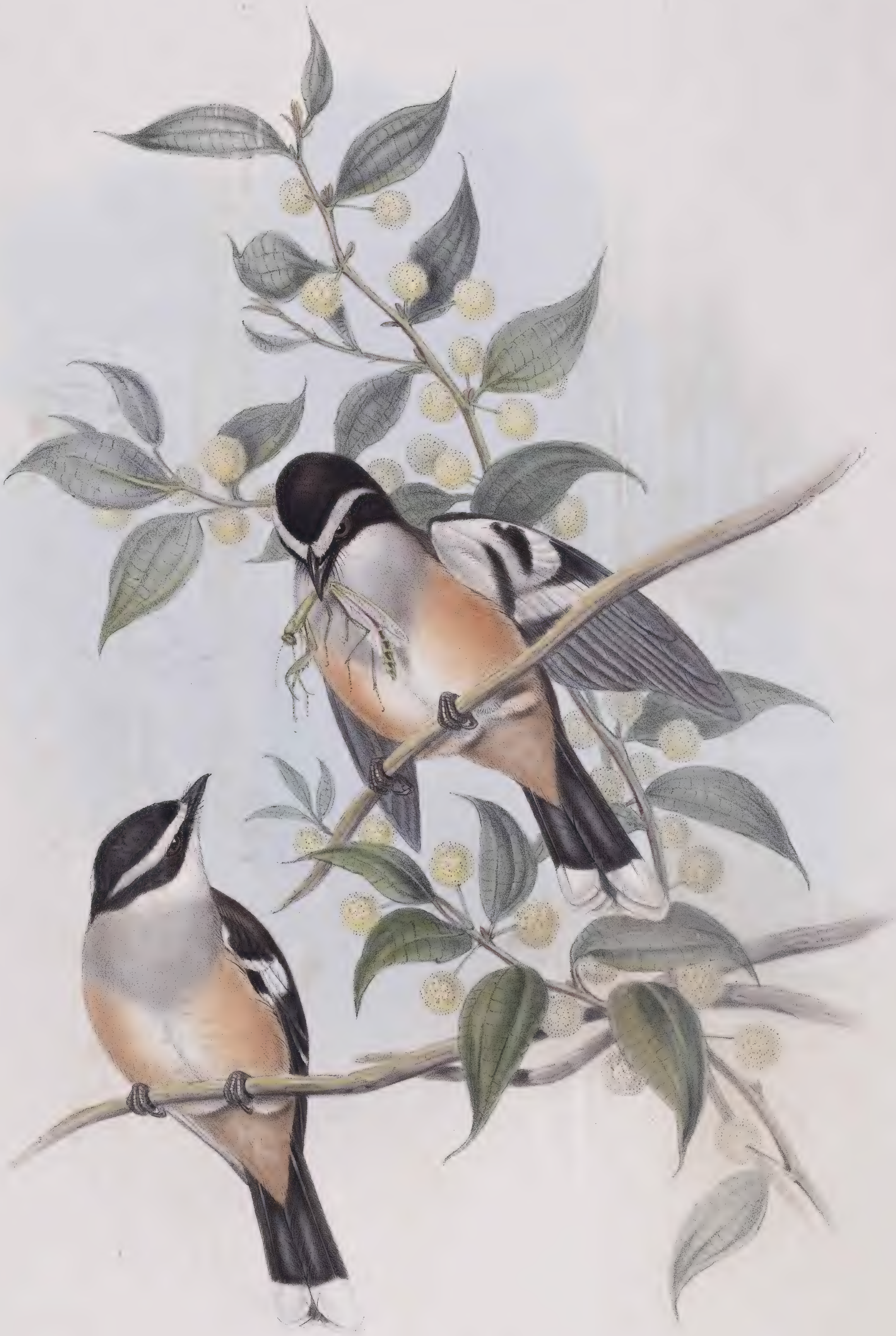
In Dr. Bennett's next communication, direct to the Society, he says:—

"On the 26th of October, 1858, the 'Oberon' cutter of forty-eight tons arrived in Sydney, having two fine young specimens of the 'Mooruk' on board, stated to be male and female. The captain informed me he had had them eight months, that he procured them soon after his arrival at New Britain, and since that time had been trading about the islands. They were about half the size of the specimen sent to England last year. Captain Devlin informs me that the natives capture them when very young, and rear them by hand. The old birds are very swift of foot, and possess great strength in the legs; on the least alarm they elevate the head, and, seeing danger, dart among the thick bush, thread about in localities where no human being could follow them, and disappear like magic. Their powers of leaping are very extraordinary. It was from this circumstance the first bird brought from New Britain was lost: from its habit of leaping, it one day made a spring on the deck and went overboard; it was blowing a strong breeze at the time, and the bird perished. In warm weather, the Captain informs me, they are fond of having a bucket of salt water thrown over them, and seem to enjoy it very much. I succeeded in purchasing these birds; and Captain Slater (the present commander of the 'Oberon') brought them to my house in a cab; and when placed in the yard, they walked about as tame as turkeys. They approached any one that came into the yard, pecking the hand as if desirous of being fed, and were very docile. They began by pecking at a bone in the yard, probably not having tasted any meat for some time, and would not, while engaged upon it, touch some boiled potatoes which were thrown to them; indeed we found afterwards they fed better out of a dish than from the ground—no doubt, having been accustomed early to be fed in that manner. They were as familiar as if born and bred among us for years, and did not require time to reconcile them to their new situation, but became sociable and quite at home at once. We found them next day rather too tame, or, like spoilt pets, too often in the way. One or both of them would walk into the kitchen; while one was dodging under the tables and chairs, the other would leap upon the table, keeping the cook in a state of excitement; or they would be heard chirping in the hall, or walk into the library in search of food or information, or walk up stairs, and then be quickly seen descending again, making their peculiar chirping, whistling noise: not a door could be left open, but in they walked, familiar with all. They kept the servants constantly on the alert: if one of them went to open the door, on turning round she found a 'Mooruk' behind her; for they seldom went together, generally wandering apart from each other. If any attempt was made to turn them out by force, they would dart rapidly round the room, dodging about under the tables, chairs, and sofas, and then end by squatting down under a sofa or in a corner; and it was impossible to remove the bird, except by carrying it away: on attempting this, the long, powerful, muscular legs would begin kicking and struggling, and soon get released, when it would politely walk out of its own accord. I found the best method was to entice them out, as if you had something eatable in the hand, when they would follow the direction in which you wished to lead them. The housemaid attempting to turn the bird out of one of the rooms, it gave her a kick and tore her dress. They walked into the stable among the horses, poking their bills into the manger. When writing in my study, a chirping, whistling noise is heard; the door, which is ajar, is pushed open, and in walk the 'Mooruks,' who quietly pace round the room, inspecting everything, and then as peaceably go out again. If any attempt is made to turn them out, they leap and dodge about, and exhibit a wonderful rapidity of movement, which no one would suppose possible from their quiet gait and manner at other times. Even in the very tame state of these birds, I have seen sufficient of them to know that, if they were loose in a wood, it would be impossible to catch them, and almost as difficult to shoot them. One day, when apparently frightened at something that occurred, I saw one of them scour round the yard at a swift pace, and speedily disappear under the archway so rapidly that the eye could hardly follow it, upsetting all the poultry in its progress that could not get out of the way. The lower half of the stable-door, about 4 feet high, was kept shut, to prevent them going in; but this proved no obstacle, as it was easily leaped over by these birds. They never appeared to take any notice of, or be frightened at, the Jabiru or Gigantic Crane, which was in the same yard, although that sedate, stately bird was not pleased at their intrusion. One day I remarked the Jabiru spreading his long wings, and clattering his beak, opposite one of the 'Mooruks,' as if in ridicule of their wingless condition. 'Mooruk,' on the other hand, was pruning its feathers, and spreading out its funny little apology for wings, as if proud of displaying the stiff horny shafts with which they were adorned. Captain Devlin says the natives consider them to a certain degree sacred, rear them as pets, and have great affection for them; he is not aware that they are used as food, but if so, not generally; indeed, their shy disposition and power of rapid running, darting through the brake and bush, would almost preclude their capture.

"The height of the largest or male of these young birds, to the top of the back, was 2 feet 2 inches, and of the female 2 feet. The height of the largest or male bird, when erect, to the top of the head, was 3 feet 2 inches, and of the female 3 feet."

An egg presented to me by Dr. Bennett, which I believe to be truly that of the Mooruk, is 5½ inches long by 3½ inches broad; the ground-colour very pale buff, with the entire surface covered with pale-green corrugations.

One of the accompanying Plates represents the head and neck of the Mooruk of the natural size; the other an adult reduced, with a young bird in the distance. I am happy to acknowledge the assistance rendered me in the preparation of these drawings by Mr. Wolf, Mr. Richter, and Mr. Wood.



PETROICA? CERVINIVENTRIS, *Gould*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del et lith.
Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

PETROICA? CERVINIVENTRIS, *Gould.*

Buff-sided Robin.

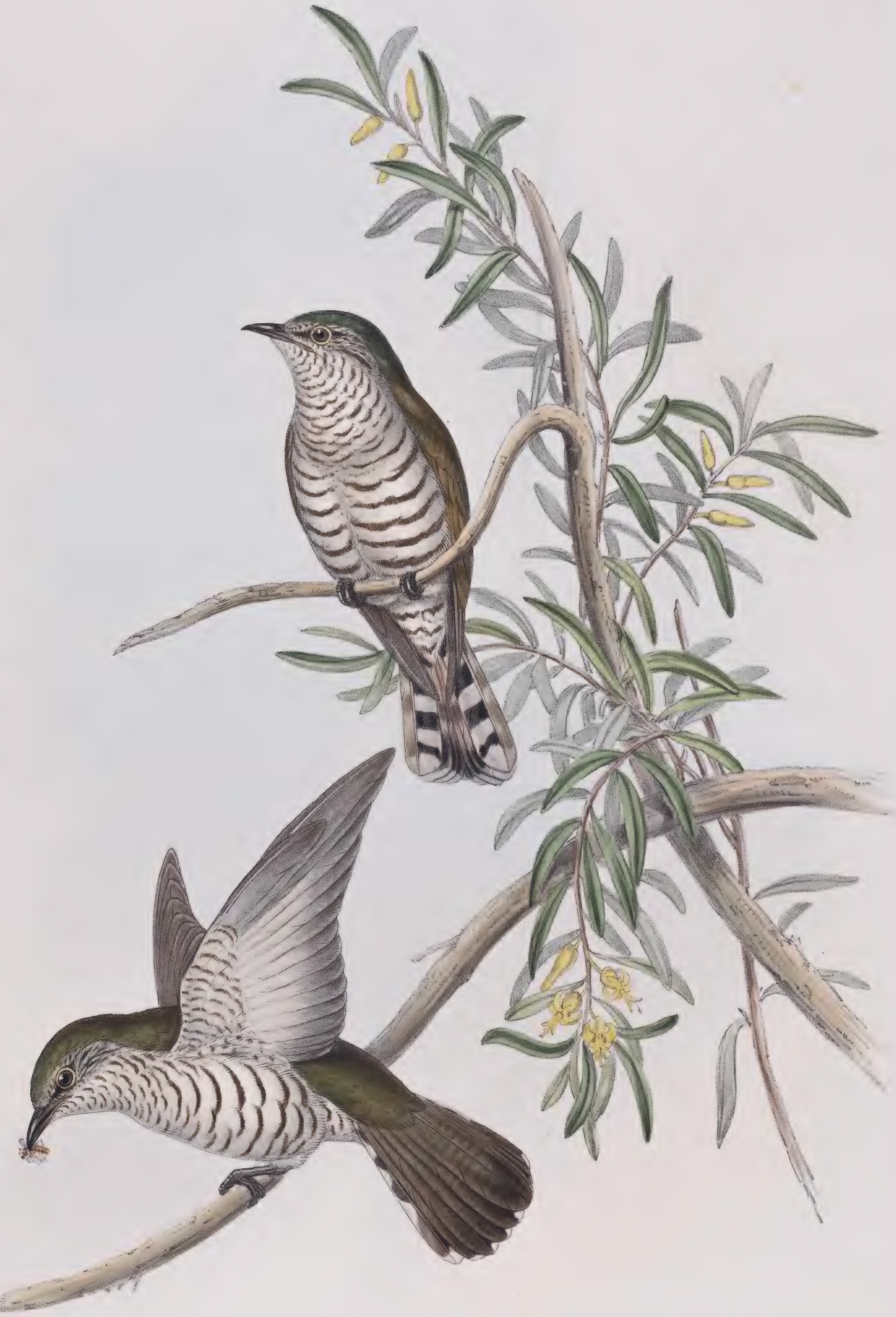
Petroica cerviniventris, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxv. p. 221.

So far as regards Ornithological science, it was fortunate that Mr. Elsey remained for a long time encamped near the Victoria River, on the north-west coast of Australia, since it enabled him to pay some attention to the natural objects which surrounded him; and the discovery of the present bird, which is quite new to science, is one of the results of his long stay in that spot in charge of a portion of Mr. Gregory's Expedition. All who have read my work on the Birds of Australia, will have observed that a species of *Petroica* is figured in the third volume under the name of *P. superciliosa,* which bird was collected by the late Mr. Gilbert in the neighbourhood of the Burdekin Lakes, towards the Gulf of Carpentaria; with this species the one here figured is very nearly allied; and as both differ somewhat in form from the typical members of the genus, or true *Petroicæ,* it may in all probability be found necessary to institute a distinct genus for their reception: they are doubtless representatives of each other in the respective countries they inhabit, the *superciliosa* dwelling on the eastern parts of the continent, and the *cerviniventris* in the western.

The following is a correct description of the species:—

All the upper surface, wings, and tail chocolate-brown; line over the eye, throat, tips of the greater wing-coverts, base of the primaries, base and tips of the secondaries, and tips of the tail white; breast grey; abdomen deep fawn-colour, becoming almost white in the centre; bill black; feet blackish brown; irides dark brown.

The figures are of the natural size.



CHRYSOCOCCYX MINUTILLUS, *Gould*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

CHRYSOCOCCYX MINUTILLUS, *Gould.*

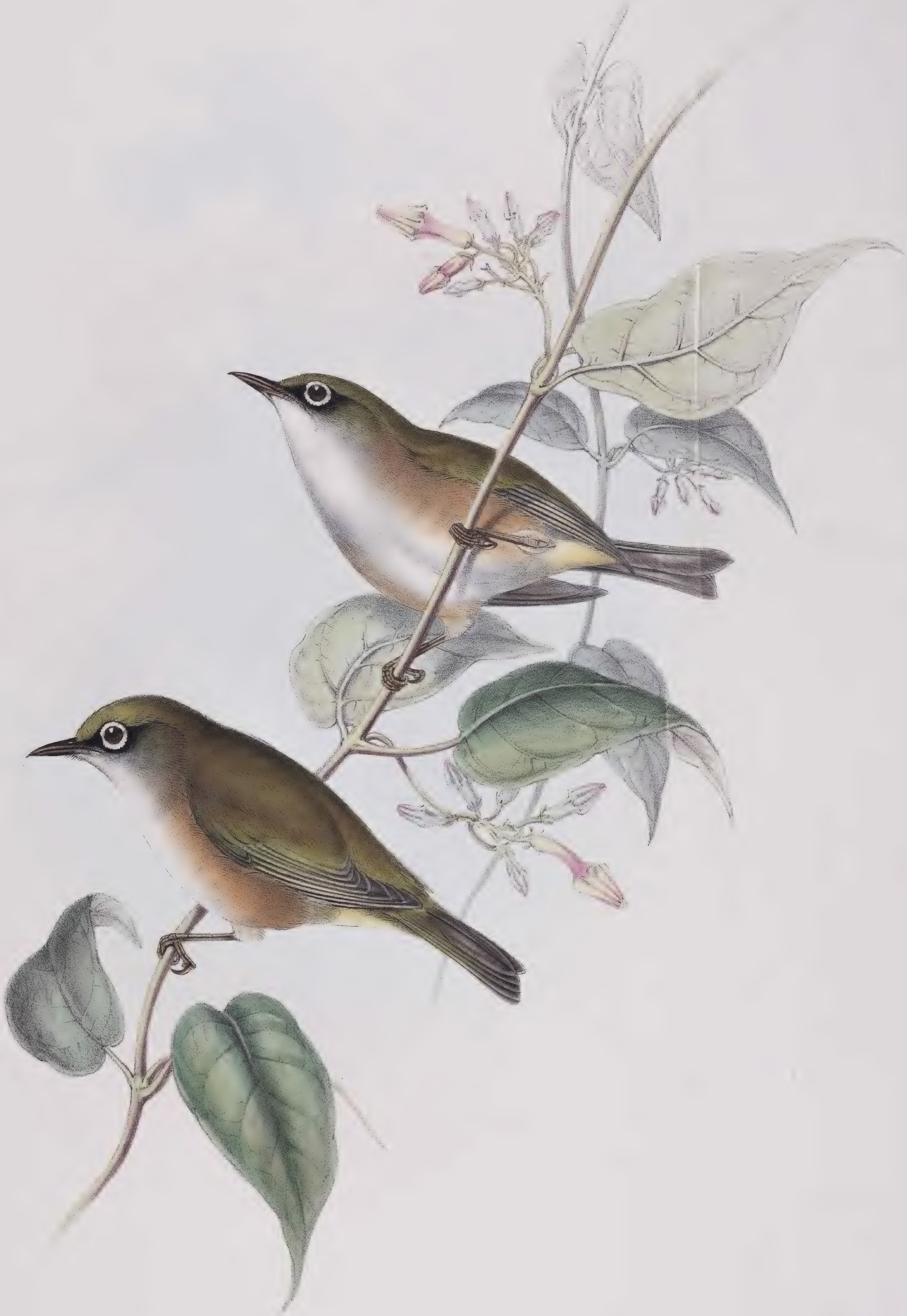
Little Cuckoo.

Chrysococcyx minutillus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxvii. p. 128.

Nothing further is known respecting this little bronze Cuckoo than that it is a native of Port Essington, whence the only specimen I have yet seen was sent. The example alluded to is fully adult, and differs very considerably from the *Chrysococcyx lucidus* and every other species with which I am acquainted. It is perhaps more nearly allied to the Java species, *C. basalis* of Horsfield, than to the *C. lucidus*, but it is as much smaller than the *C. basalis* as that bird is less than *C. lucidus*. The type of *C. basalis*, which is the only one I have seen, and is probably the only one known, is not a fully adult bird; and yet its admeasurement exceeds by half an inch that of the *C. minutillus*.

Head, all the upper surface, and wings shining bronzy green; all the under surface white, barred with bronzy green, the bars being most distinct on the flanks; primaries and secondaries white on the basal portion of their inner webs; two centre tail-feathers bronzy green, the next on each side bronzy green on the outer web, rufous on the inner web, crossed by a broad band of black near the tip, and with an oval spot of white across the tip of the inner web; the two next on each side bronzy green on their outer webs, their inner webs rufous with large spots of black near the shaft, most conspicuous on the outermost of the two feathers; their inner webs are also crossed near the tip with a very broad band of black, and have an oval spot of white at the tip; the outer feather on each side is barred alternately on the outer web with dull bronzy green and dull white, and on the inner one with broad decided bars of black and white and tipped with white; bill black; feet olive.

The figures are of the natural size.



ZOSTEROPS ALBOGULARIS, *Gould.*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

ZOSTEROPS ALBOGULARIS, *Gould.*

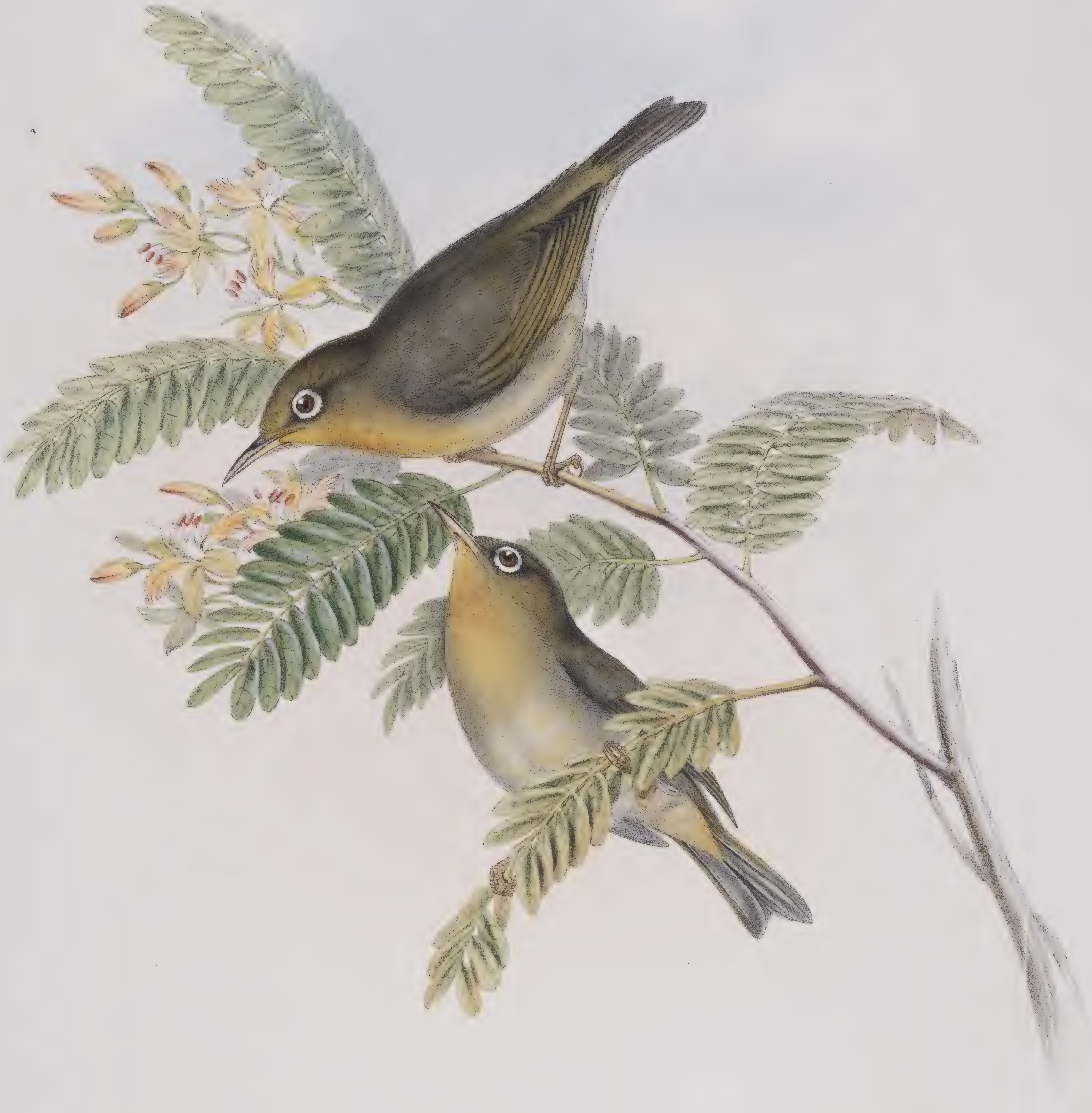
White-breasted Zosterops.

Zosterops albogularis, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part iv. p. 75; and in Syn. Birds of Aust., pl. . fig. 2.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 198, *Zosterops*, sp. 6.

The members of the genus *Zosterops* have a most extensive range over the old world. India proper has its own peculiar species, and so have Southern Africa, Japan, and China; but the countries in which the species are most numerous are Australia, Lord Howe's and Norfolk Islands, and the great Papuan group, including New Caledonia and the adjacent islands: in all these localities they occur in abundance. Every island appears to have its own particular species, and some of them two or three: Lord Howe's Island has two, and in Norfolk and Philip Islands two others occur. On the continent of Australia there are at least three or four very distinct species, all different from those of the islands, Tasmania excepted. Of all these numerous species, the present bird is one of the largest; it was characterized and figured by me as long since as January 1837; its native country is Norfolk Island, whence specimens have been sent from time to time ever since it was formed into a penal settlement. As is the case with the other members of the genus, there appears to be but little difference in the outward characters of the sexes, all the specimens that have reached this country being very similar.

All the upper surface and wing-coverts greenish olive, strongly tinged with chestnut on the back; wings and tail brown, margined with olive-green; a broad zone of white feathers surrounds each eye, bounded in front and below with black; throat and centre of the abdomen white; flanks pale chestnut, under tail-coverts pale yellow; bill and legs lead colour.

The figures are the size of life.



ZOSTEROPS TENUIROSTRIS, *Gould.*

J. Gould and H.C. Richter del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

ZOSTEROPS TENUIROSTRIS, *Gould.*

Slender-billed Zosterops.

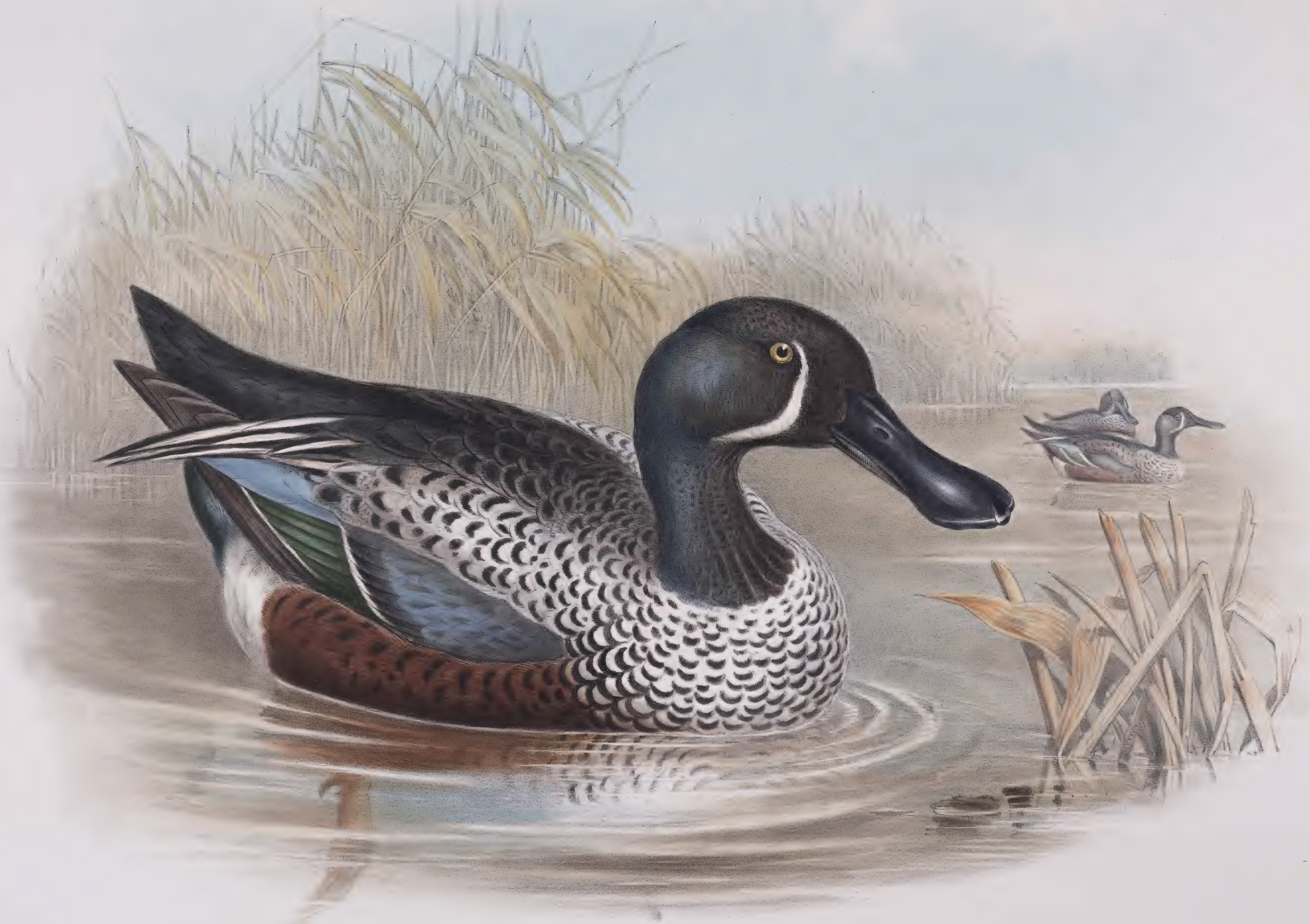
Zosterops tenuirostris, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part iv. p. 76, and in Syn. Birds of Aust., pl. . fig. 1.
——— *lateralis,* Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 198, *Zosterops,* sp. 5.

The specific name of *tenuirostris* has been given to this bird from the circumstance of its bill being somewhat prolonged when compared with the bills of the other members of the genus; not only is its bill more lengthened, but its body is also more slender and elegant in contour than that of any of its congeners. Its native country is Norfolk Island, whence all the specimens I have seen have been forwarded to this country, by way of New South Wales. It is a very distinct and well-defined species, and is of large size when compared with most of its near allies. Of its habits, manners, and mode of life nothing has yet been recorded, which is much to be regretted, as they might present some peculiarities consequent upon the particular character of the vegetation of this remote island, which differs very considerably from that of Australia. I fear the time is gone by when we might expect to glean any information respecting it from some intelligent Government officer stationed in this famed Paradise of climate and vegetation; it can scarcely be supposed that the Pitcairn Islanders, who now inhabit it, can have contracted a taste for natural history.

All the specimens I have seen being similarly coloured, it is believed that the sexes, like those of *Zosterops albogularis,* do not differ in outward appearance.

Head, all the upper surface, and wing-coverts olive-green, brightest on the head and upper tail-coverts; wings and tail brown, margined with olive-green; throat yellow, stained with red in the centre; centre of the abdomen and under tail-coverts pale yellow; flanks olive-brown; bill and legs light brown, inclining to lead-colour; eye surrounded by a narrow zone of white feathers, bounded below by a line of blackish brown.

The figures are of the natural size.



SPATULA VARIEGATA, *Gould.*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

SPATULA VARIEGATA, *Gould.*

Variegated Shoveller.

Spatula variegata, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxiv. p. 95.

Among the novelties brought by Mr. Walter Mantell from New Zealand was a species of Shoveller Duck, which is certainly new to science, for with no one of the members of this well-defined genus of typical ducks can it be confounded. Its nearest ally is the Australian species, *Spatula rhynchotis*; but it differs from it in its more variegated plumage, and in other particulars, as will be readily seen on an examination of the accompanying Plate. Supposing it to have been collected at the same time as the fine Parrot *Nestor notabilis*, the Middle Island of New Zealand will be the part where at least it is occasionally found. It is somewhat strange that so large a bird as this duck should not have fallen to the gun of the collector before; yet, on the other hand, how seldom does the common Shoveller of Europe (*Spatula clypeata*) fall before the gun of the sportsman; even in the parts of England where it is most common, he may pass years without an opportunity occurring for shooting one.

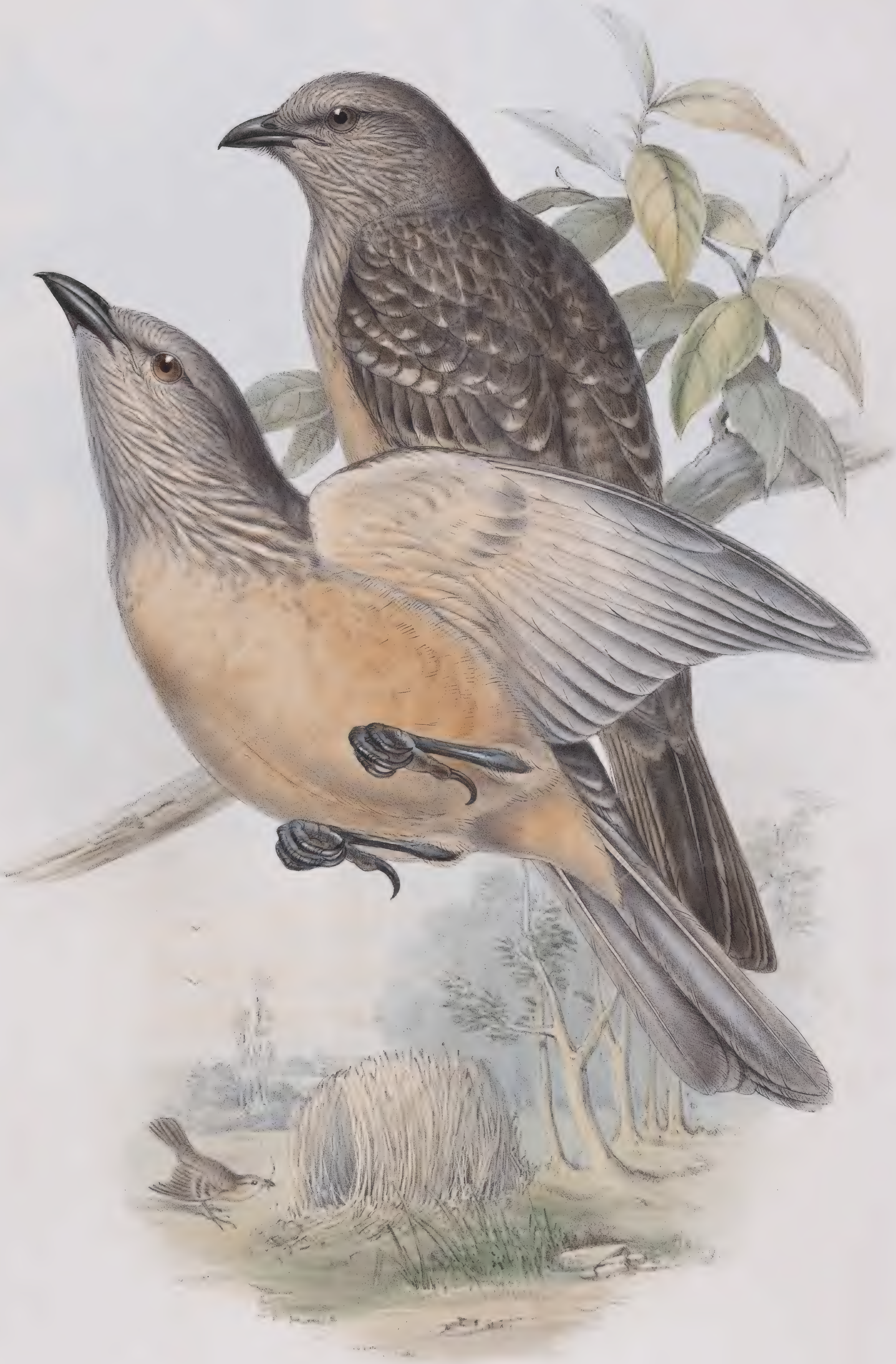
The *Spatula variegata*, which forms the fifth and is by far the handsomest species of the genus *Spatula*, is distinguished from the other members by the dark crescentic markings which decorate the feathers of the breast, sides of the neck, and scapularies. The species of this well-defined form previously described are *Spatula clypeata*, which inhabits Europe, North America, India and China; *S. rhynchotis*, which is found throughout Australia; *S. maculata*, the habitat of which is Chili and probably the neighbouring countries of Peru and Bolivia; and *S. capensis* of South Africa.

Crown of the head and space surrounding the base of the bill brownish black; on either side of the face between the bill and the eye a lunar-shaped streak of white, bounded posteriorly with speckles of black; cheeks, sides and back of the neck dark grey with greenish reflexions; front of the neck dark brown, each feather narrowly fringed with white; back brownish black, the feathers of the upper part margined with greyish brown; feathers of the breast, sides of lower part of the neck, the mantle and scapularies white, with a crescent of blackish brown near the tip; under surface dark chestnut blotched with black; flanks lighter chestnut barred with black; lesser wing-coverts dull greenish blue; greater wing-coverts dark brown, fringed at the tip with white; first elongated scapularies blue-grey, with a conspicuous line of white on the outer web next the shaft, bounded posteriorly with black; the next blue-grey, margined on the inner web with white; the remainder greenish black, with a lengthened lanceolate mark of dull or brownish white down the centre of the apical half; speculum deep green; primaries dark brown with lighter shafts; under surface of the shoulder white; on each side of the vent a patch of white freckled with black; under tail-coverts black, tinged with shining green; tail dark brown; irides bright yellow; bill dark purplish black, the under mandible clouded with yellow; legs and feet yellow.

Total length, 16½ inches; bill, 3; wing, 9¼; tail, 4½; tarsi, 1⅝.

The figure is of the natural size.

27



CHLAMYDERA CERVINIVENTRIS, *Gould*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter del et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton Imp.

CHLAMYDERA CERVINIVENTRIS, *Gould.*

Fawn-breasted Bower-bird.

Chlamydera cerviniventris, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xviii. p. 201.

If any one circumstance more than another would tend to hand down the name of the author of the "Birds of Australia" to posterity, it would be the discovery and the publication of the singular habits of the Bower-birds. In figuring and describing, then, an additional species of this group of birds, I feel that I am presenting to the notice of the ornithological world another of the most interesting birds with which we are acquainted. The discovery of the present species is due to Mr. John MacGillivray, who procured a specimen at Cape York, secured its curious bower, and transmitted both to the British Museum. The two formerly known and nearly allied species being both conspicuously adorned with a lovely frill of liliaceous feathers at the nape of the neck, I naturally supposed that the same kind of ornament would be found in all the species; but it appears that such is not the case, for there is not a trace of it in any of the examples of *C. cerviniventris* I have yet seen; and I believe some of them are very old birds. In size this species is rather larger than *C. maculata*, or almost intermediate between that species and *C. nuchalis*; it has also a similar character of markings on the back, but the brown spots are neither so large, so round, nor so deeply coloured: the distinguishing feature of the present species is its rich, uniformly-coloured, buff under surface, a feature which does not exist either in the *C. maculata* or *C. nuchalis*. The bower differs very remarkably from those of the other two species; it is about 13 inches long and 10 or 11 inches high; its walls, which are very thick, are nearly upright, or but little inclining towards each other at the top, so that the passage through is very narrow. This elevated structure, which is formed of fine twigs, is placed on a very thick platform of thicker twigs, nearly 4 feet in length and almost as much in breadth: here and there a small snail-shell or berry is dropped in the way of decoration.

The following note relative to this bird is extracted from Mr. MacGillivray's "Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. Rattlesnake:"—

"Two days before we left Cape York, I was told that some Bower-birds had been seen in a thicket or patch of low scrub, half a mile from the beach; and after a long search I found a recently-constructed bower, 4 feet long and 18 inches high, with some fresh berries lying upon it. The bower was situated near the border of the thicket, the bushes composing which were seldom more than 10 feet high, growing in smooth sandy soil without grass.

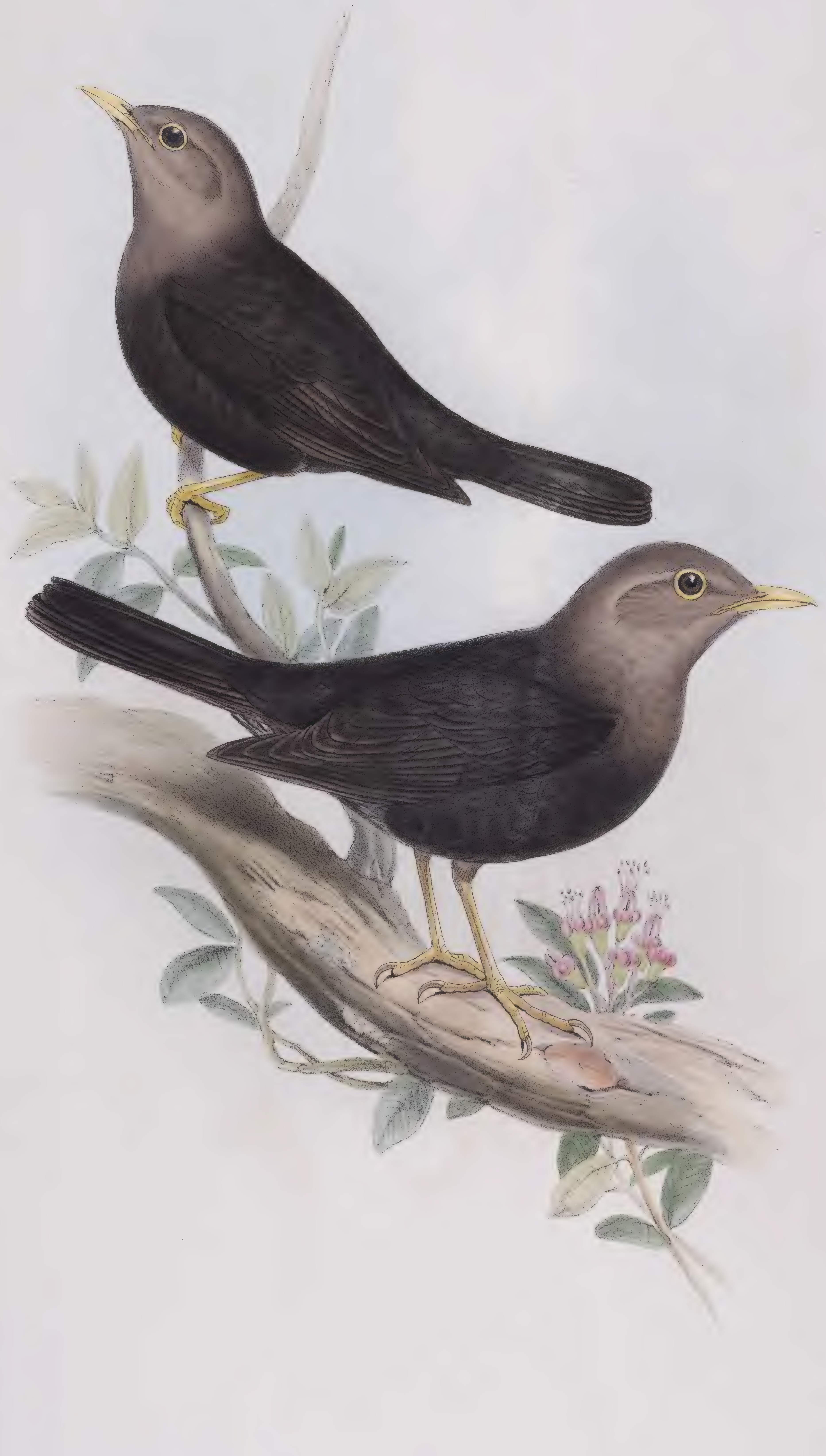
"Next morning I was landed before daylight, and proceeded to the place in company with Paida, taking with us a large board on which to carry off the bower as a specimen. I had great difficulty in inducing my friend to accompany me, as he was afraid of a war party of Gomokudins, which tribe had lately given notice that they were coming to fight the Evans Bay people. However, I promised to protect him, and loaded one barrel with ball, which gave him increased confidence; still he insisted upon carrying a large bundle of spears and a throwing-stick.

"While watching in the scrub, I caught several glimpses of the *tewinga* (the native name) as it darted through the bushes in the neighbourhood of the bower, announcing its presence by an occasional loud *churr-r-r*, and imitating the notes of various other birds, especially the Leatherhead. I never before met with a more wary bird; and, for a long time, it enticed me to follow it to a short distance, then flying off and alighting on the bower it would deposit a berry or two, run through and be off again before I could reach the spot. All this time it was impossible to get a shot. At length, just as my patience was becoming exhausted, I saw the bird enter the bower and disappear, when I fired at random through the twigs, fortunately with effect. So closely had we concealed ourselves latterly, and so silent had we been, that a kangaroo, while feeding, actually hopped up within fifteen yards, unconscious of our presence until fired at. My Bower-bird proved to be a new species, since described by Mr. Gould as *Chlamydera cerviniventris*; and the bower is exhibited in the British Museum."

When Mr. MacGillivray speaks of the bird alighting on the top of the bower, he must mean on the platform, as, from the fineness of the twigs of which the bower itself is constructed, with the weaker ends upwards, they could not support the weight of the bird.

Upper surface brown, each feather of the back and wings margined and marked at the tip with buffy white; throat striated with greyish brown and buff; under surface of the shoulder, abdomen, thighs, and under tail-coverts light pure fawn-colour.

The front figure is of the size of life.



MERULA POLIOCEPHALA.

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del. et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

MERULA POLIOCEPHALA.

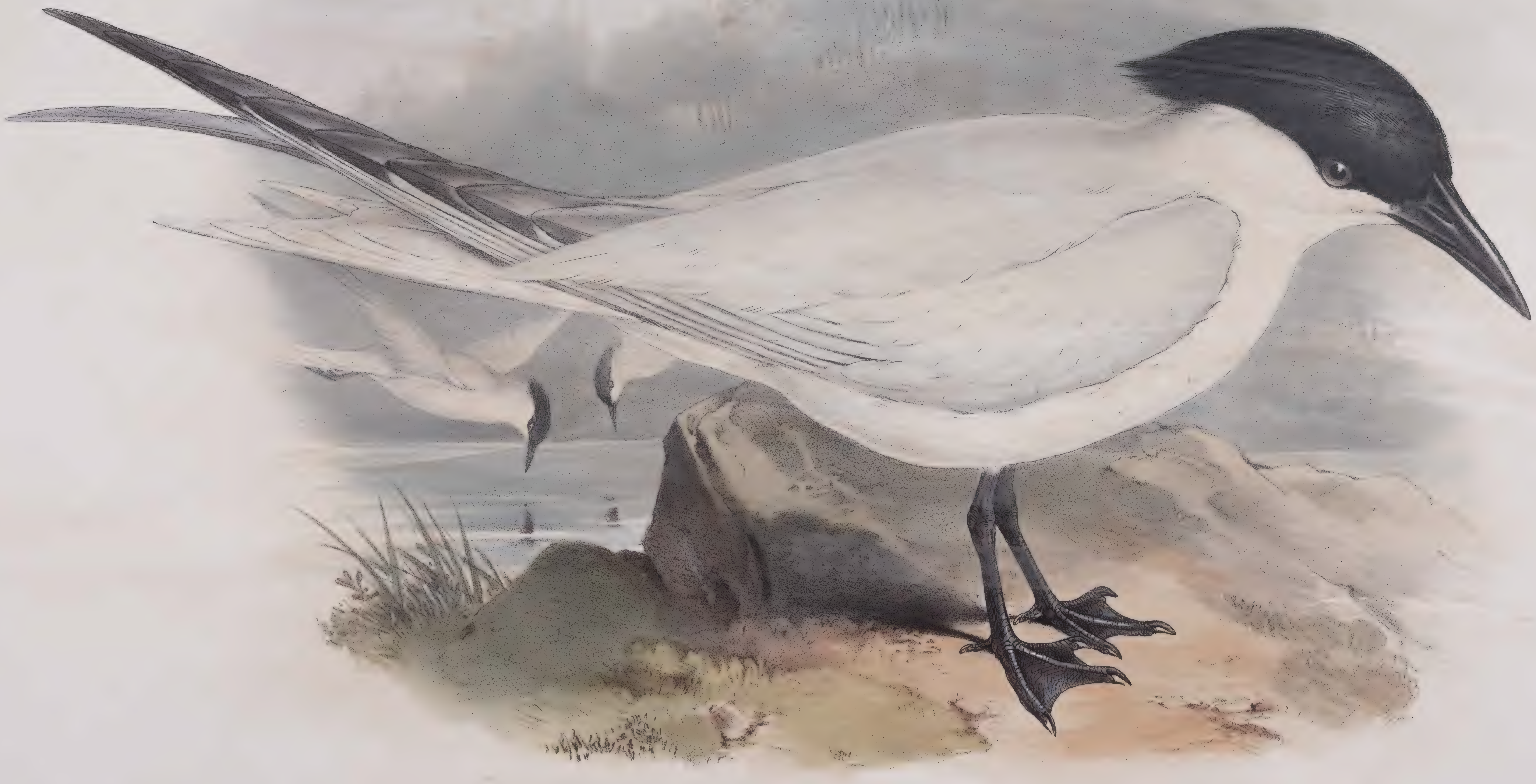
Grey-headed Blackbird.

Turdus poliocephalus, Lath. Ind. Orn. Supp., xliv. 25.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 219, *Turdus*, sp. 72.
——*fuliginosus*, Lath. in Lamb. Icon. ined., vol. ii. pl. 42.
Merula Nestor, Gould.—Jard. and Selb. Ill. Orn., new series, pl. 37.
Ash-headed Thrush, Lath. Gen. Syn. Supp., vol. ii. App. p. 373.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. x. p. 226.
Turdus fuliginosus, Lath. Ind. Orn. Supp., xlii. ?
Sooty Thrush, Lath. Gen. Syn. Supp., vol. ii. p. 185 ?.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. x. p. 195 ?.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. v. p. 125 ?.

The present species of *Merula* appears to have been known for a much longer period than I had supposed; indeed I was not aware that Latham had given a good description of the bird under the name of *Turdus poliocephalus*, otherwise I should not have proposed the additional name of *Nestor*. When Norfolk Island was first made a penal settlement, this bird was doubtless very common there; but I have reason to believe it has now become scarce, having been partially extirpated by the Government officers and convicts who tenanted this beautiful island for so many years. Some short time since, I described a second species of this form from Lord Howe's Island, under the name of *Merula vinitincta*; and I have seen a third species in the British Museum (*Merula xanthopus* ?, *Turdus aurantius*, var. β Gmel.), which I believe is from New Caledonia. All these have a general resemblance both as to form and style of colouring; and it would be as well perhaps if they were formed into a new genus among the *Merulinæ*, for I have always considered them somewhat removed from the true Blackbirds of Northern Asia and Europe. I have long wished to know something of the habits and economy of these birds, but at present nothing has been ascertained: there appears to be less difference in the colouring of the sexes than occurs among the true *Merulæ*; for the birds I consider to be females are very similarly coloured, and are only a trifle less in size.

Head, neck, and front of the throat light ashy brown, the remainder of the plumage dark sooty black; in some specimens the under tail-coverts have a stripe of dull white down the centre of each; bill, eyelash and feet yellow.

The figures are of the natural size.



GELOCHELIDON MACROTARSA, *Gould.*

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del et lith.

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp.

GELOCHELIDON MACROTARSA, *Gould.*

Great-footed Tern.

Sterna macrotarsa, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part v. p. 26; and in Syn. Birds of Aust., pl. . fig. 2.

It is now about twenty-five years ago since a small collection of Australian birds was sent to the Council of King's College, London, as a donation to their museum. In this collection was a fine species of Tern, which proved to be new to science, and of which I published, in 1837, a full description, together with its admeasurements and a sketch of the head, under the name of *Sterna macrotarsa*. In the interval between 1837 and 1859, I have only seen two other examples; it is evident, therefore, that the bird is extremely rare, or that we have not yet visited its true habitat. One of the two specimens referred to was procured by the late Mr. Elsey on the Victoria River in North-western Australia, and is now in the British Museum; the other, which is in my own possession, was obtained at Moreton Bay. The specimen in my own collection (and, I believe, the one procured by Mr. Elsey) is considerably larger in all its admeasurements than that in the King's College Museum; and the latter, which is probably a female, very much exceeds in size the Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon Anglica*) of Europe, to which species the present bird is nearly allied, and of which it is evidently the representative on the Australian continent. One of the principal features which distinguishes the Australian bird from its northern representative, is its light and silvery-coloured back and wings; it has also a much stouter and longer bill, as well as longer and larger legs.

I have at this moment before me, for the purpose of comparison, beautiful skins of the *G. Anglica*, collected by Mr. Osbert Salvin in North Africa; one from the continent of India, and another from Java: all these are as nearly alike as possible in colour and admeasurements; it is evident therefore that the European and Indian birds are of the same species.

The following are the admeasurements of the bird I have figured from:—

Total length 17 inches; bill, $2\frac{1}{4}$; wing, $13\frac{3}{4}$; tail, 6; tarsi, $1\frac{5}{8}$.

In summer the crown of the head and back of the neck are black; all the upper surface and primaries are light silvery grey; the remainder of the plumage is white; and the bill and feet are black.

In winter the black colouring of the head probably disappears and is replaced by white.

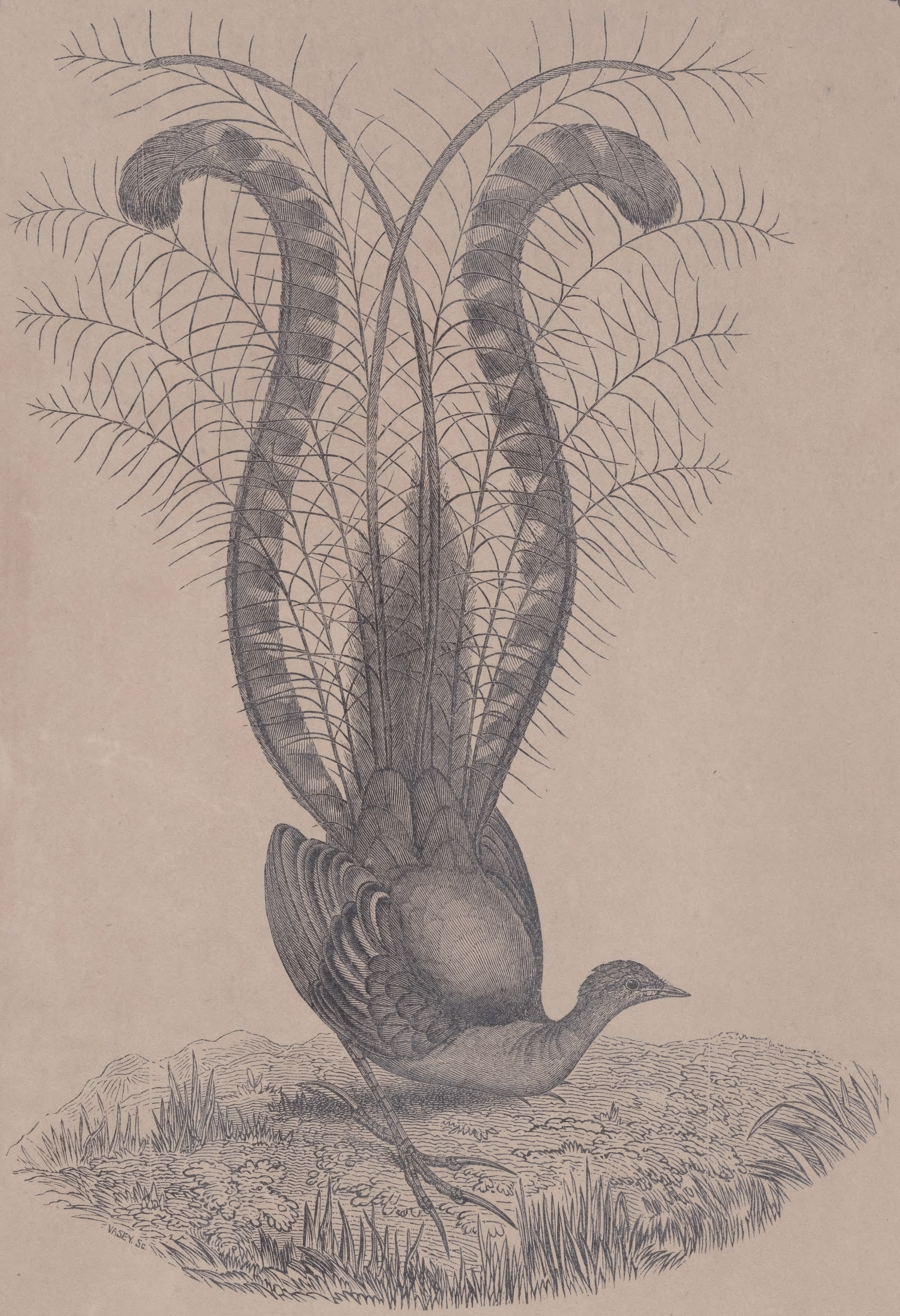
The figure is somewhat less than the natural size.

MAG
65

99100 7777

AI-1

THE
BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA.



BY J. GOULD, F.R.S. &c.

SUPPLEMENT.—PART III.

CONTENTS.

Malurus coronatus.
Semioptera Wallacei.
Psephotus chrysopterygius.
Nestor notabilis.
——— Esslingii.
——— hypopolius.
Casuarius Bennetti, head of the natural size.
——— ———, whole figure reduced.
Petroica ? cerviniventris.
Chrysococcyx minutillus.
Zosterops albogularis.
Zosterops tenuirostris.
Spatula variegata.
Chlamydera cerviniventris.
Merula poliocephala.
Gelochelidon macrotarsa.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR, 20, BROAD STREET, GOLDEN SQUARE,
SEPTEMBER 1st, 1859.

[*Price Three Guineas.*]